

The Wise Woman in Guided Imagery:
A Feminist Interpretation

by
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to the wise woman

PREFACE

In the fall of 1979 I attended a workshop on "Memory Healing" conducted by Ruth Carter Stapleton. I was simultaneously struck by the power of her imagery method and alienated by the exclusive male imagery. I saw much good being done but wondered if her approach wasn't counterproductive to women's efforts to recognize and act from the core of their own knowledge of themselves and the higher power within. This experience was the beginning of my quest for equally powerful female images to use in therapeutic settings. After my exposure to the wise woman image by Charlotte Ellen, I combined that image with some of the memory healing techniques in my therapeutic practice. The wise woman imagery studied in this work is a child of these experiences.

As I worked on writing this dissertation, I had the strong personal image of being in the midst of the birth process. In fact the essence of the conception, gestation and delivery process I was experiencing was concretized by the Motherpeace Tarot card, the "10 of discs." The card shows a woman giving birth, supported physically by a woman on either side, with a third woman catching the baby. Ten other women spiritually supported the process by standing in a circle around the birther. I then meditated on each of the women who have helped me in this process and found their

number to also be thirteen. My heartfelt gratitude is extended to my study participants, Kieran, Bess, Cali, Karris and Tree; my baby "catcher" and chairperson of my committee, Mary Elizabeth Moore; and the women who supported me through their contributions of emotional support, feedback and sparking, and technical assistance, Judy Orr, Charlotte Ellen, Joan Overturf, Joan Groom, Michele Papen-Daniel, Linda Terrill, and Peg Ridley. This has been a work of creation that has contributed to my life and to the lives of others. It is a testimony to the empowerment of community birthing and growth.

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to increase the understanding and awareness of the wise woman image; to explore the usage of this image in guided imagery with women; and to provide a rationale for the usage of the image of the wise woman as an appropriate therapeutic tool. These objectives are met through a grounded theory study based on the data gathered from a theoretical sample of five adult self-identified feminist women.

The women participated in four guided imagery sessions in which the only image specified was a woman of wisdom. Each imagery session was followed by a report of the experience. The Tennessee Self Concept Scale was administered as a pre- and post-test. It was administered a third time with instructions to complete it as the wise woman would. The experience concluded with a structured interview at the conclusion of the study. These data were subjected to content analysis, coded and arranged into theoretical concepts and categories.

The interrelatedness of the categories was examined to arrive at 7 theoretical propositions: 1) Wise woman imagery is a path to self knowledge. 2) The wise woman is a powerful personality who is capable of handling very complex situations because of her ability to draw on various

subroles such as mother, midwife, healer and virgin. 3) The guided imagery technique is an effective method for gaining access to the wise woman. Further, the guided imagery technique, in tandem with the wise woman image, provides an effective process of personal change. 4) The wise woman is a mediator between a woman's current expressions of self and her possible expressions of self. 5) The wise woman is an image of female deity. 6) Wise woman imagery erases the dualisms within and between psychology and theology. 7) Wise woman imagery has important political implications. Therapeutic implications were considered.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this age of the fathers, for women to turn to female images as a source of personal power and authority is the ultimate Feminist revolution. This study explores the significance and function of enabling women to get in touch with their internal images of strength and power through the use of the wise woman image in guided imagery.

It was just a short time ago that telling women's stories from a woman's point of view was considered a revolutionary act (Christ, 1980). "Women have lived in the interstices between their own vaguely understood experience and the shapings given to experience by the stories and authority of men" (Christ, p.5). The recognition of women's life in the interstices emerged quite clearly in the first wave of feminism beginning at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention and more powerfully in the explosion of books and stories produced by the second wave of feminism which began with the publication of The Feminine Mystique (Freidan, 1963).

Women on the crest of this wave of awareness point out that women's life and place in the existing patriarchal culture is problematic. The biology of reproduction has

been seen as a destiny rather than as a resource. This is combined with the myths of the "white male system," such as: it is the only thing that exists, it is innately superior, it knows and understands everything, and believes it is possible to be totally logical, rational and objective (Schaeff, 1981, pp.7-14), to produce the world view that has shaped women's personalities. The system works to insure that women display such characteristically female behavior and ideals as "self-sacrifice, masochism, reproductive narcissism, compassionate 'maternality', dependency, sexual timidity and unhappiness, father worship--and the overwhelming dislike and devaluation of women" (Chesler, 1972, p.xxi).

The cost to the quality of human life is high from women believing they get their identity externally from the white male system and that the white male system is necessary to validate their identity. The incidence of "madness" among women is significantly higher than women's proportionate percentage in the population at large would suggest we predict (Chesler, 1972, p.33). Women must cope with what the system defines as "the original sin of being born female" (Schaeff, 1981, p.23).

The lack of women's stories being told by women, the lack of female images developed by women, the futile efforts to live up to stories and images of women as told and

developed by men in fields such as theology, psychology and advertising, and the inferior valuation of the services of women as indicated by the fact that women receive only 57 cents to every dollar earned by a man, are just a few of the factors contributing to the confused and diffused self concept of women. Evidence of this is found in best selling books such as Chesler's Women and Madness (1972), and Dowling's The Cinderella Complex (1981). The bias of patriarchy and the role of the white male system is being exposed by feminist theologians and psychologists alike. These women are pointing out the inadequate myths women have been taught to live by. And as they begin to tell uniquely female stories, they all point to the need for female models and images that allow women to develop a new self-concept based on women trusting their own personal and community experience, and on an affirmation of the legitimacy and goodness of female power. "A woman should be encouraged to know her will, to believe her will is valid, and to believe her will can be accomplished in the world" (Christ, 1979, p.284).

Feminist theologians have recognized the formative role of religion in creating and complicating problems of identity for women in a society modeled after a patriarchal religious world view. Mary Daly has been a leading figure in her depiction of the previously unrecognized bias of

patriarchy in her books Beyond God the Father (1973), and Gyn/Ecology (1978). Carol Christ summarizes the effects on women of worshipping a male god, as well as the role of symbols and stories in identity formation. In her paper of the same title presented to the American Academy of Religion in 1977 she discussed why women need the goddess image. At that time she asked, "Does the emergence of the symbol of the goddess have significant political and psychological ramifications for the feminist movement?" Her answer: "Yes."

Both Daly and Christ have been leaders of feminist women choosing to leave traditional religions in search of a new spirituality that is sometimes characterized by goddess worship. Women such as Merlin Stone (1976), Charlene Spretnak (1978), Gimbutus (1974), and Geraldine Thorsten (1980) are trying to reclaim and reconstruct a matrifocal past in order to validate women's movement towards discovering the goddess image. Carol Christ (1979), Diane Mariechild (1981), and Starhawk (1980) claim that the goddess image is valuable with or without historical rooting though there is much archeological evidence in which goddess images are present.

Other feminist theologians are choosing to remain within the church and lead revisionist movements calling for the full participation of women in the ministry, including

the retranslation of scripture to incorporate inclusive language and the reinterpretation of problematic passages. Some of the leaders of this movement are Rosemary Reuther (1983), Letty Russell (1974), and Phyllis Tribble (1973). Elizabeth Schüsler Fiorenza (1983) is calling for an ecclesia of women to choose and develop those scriptural texts that empower women and leave intact the texts that do damage so that women might be reminded of the dangers of patriarchy. She points out that simple revision of language towards inclusiveness covers over the deeper patriarchal and hierarchical scriptural biases. She uses scripture as an entry point into the lives of women in the past.

In each of the above movements women are in search of models and images that facilitate their growth and empowerment. Each path has value as well as limitations. For some women, the leap to goddess worship or even nature religion is too radical; for others, remaining in the church under any circumstances is stifling.

The purpose of the present research on the function and significance of the wise woman in guided imagery is to explore the use of the archetypal image of the "wise woman" as a symbol and model of female affirmation that has both theological and psychological significance. Preliminary use of wise woman guided imagery in a therapeutic setting has indicated that it is a valuable method of gaining access to

the wisdom of women in ways that facilitate change and cause a minimal amount of threat. The indication is that this image may be useful for feminists regardless of their spiritual inclinations.

Need and Value of the Study

The use of specific images in therapeutic intervention and in research utilizing guided imagery is common practice (Kosbab, 1974; Desoille, 1966; Leuner, 1977). However, a careful review of the literature indicates that the actual significance and function of the images for the client or participant has not been systematically investigated.

Many of the images which are used are derived from theoretical models for therapy, such as analytical approaches (Desoille, 1945; Rehyer, 1963; Jung, 1961; Leuner, 1969; Frétigny, 1968); cognitive approaches (Wolpe, 1958; Cautela, 1966; Bandura, 1969; Singer, 1974); and humanistic approaches (Moreno, 1967; Assagioli, 1965; Gerard, 1961; Crampton, 1974). Additionally, the therapeutic techniques of mental imagery utilizing specific images have been applied medically as a tool of diagnosis, prognosis and intervention in physical illness (Bry, 1978; Rossman and Remen, 1981; Oyle, 1974, 1976; Simonton and Simonton, 1978), spiritually as a tool for memory healing (Stapleton, 1976,

1977; Sanford, 1947) and popularly as a means to self improvement (Maltz, 1960; Peale, 1954; Progoff, 1980; Gawain, 1978; Bry, 1979).

In all of these applications of guided imagery utilizing a specific image, the images have been chosen because of their correspondence to a particular theory or because they seemed to be appropriate to a specific problem. For example, Desoille (1945) suggests that the image of a sword represents masculine identity and the image of a vessel represents feminine identity, while Simonton and Simonton (1978) suggest specific images of cancer cells being attacked and consumed by healing forces. In feminist therapy the image of the wise woman is suggested by the literature which emphasizes the need for strong, active female images.

This writer was unable to discover studies in which the rationale for a specific image was explicated or in which the actual meaning the image had for the subject was explored. The image of the wise woman suggested by writers in the field of feminist psychotherapy is derived from a priori considerations of the significance and function of this image for women. Specifically, these assumptions include the idea that such an image will assist women to formulate strong identities and enhance self concept.

Clearly, then, there exists a need within feminist

scholarship: 1) to analyze and articulate the significance and function of the image of the wise woman for the development of women's identities, and 2) to discover the effect of wise women imagery on the self concept of women.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to: 1) increase understanding and awareness of the wise woman image in feminist writings; 2) explore the usage of this image in guided imagery with women; and 3) provide a theoretical rationale for the usage of the image of the wise woman as an appropriate therapeutic tool.

The "wise woman" is being used as an affective term to describe a female personification of wisdom much like the concept found in psychosynthesis of the "higher self," or organizing principle of life. The assumption is that through the intra-psychic method of guided imagery, every woman can meet a wise woman within with whom a supportive relationship can be built.

Guided imagery is the generic term used to describe the therapeutic approach of a therapist leading a client in relaxation exercises, followed by the suggestion of specific mental picture sequences. The goal is to facilitate insight and growth.

Limitations of the Research

The limitations of the research are as follows:

1) This study is concerned with an investigation of the phenomenological implications of the wise woman image for five self-identified feminist women, and of the effect of the wise women guided imagery on the self concept of the five women.

2) This study is limited to an investigation of the writings on guided imagery and on the image of the wise woman as found in Western historical and contemporary writings.

3) This study is limited to the generation of a grounded theory based on the investigation of the significance and function of the wise woman image for five feminist women for whom spirituality is important.

Procedure

The development of a theory about the significance and function of the wise woman imagery for feminist women can be most effectively accomplished by obtaining data grounded in the experience of adult women. To reach the objectives of this study, the investigation is conducted by doing a

comparative analysis of qualitative data drawn from session transcriptions, interviews, and observations supplemented by written statements. Further data is drawn from three administrations of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.

Method of Research

The initial substantive theory is based on data gathered from a theoretical sample of five adult, self-identified feminist women. The women were asked to participate in four guided imagery sessions (See Appendix A) in which the only image specified was the woman of wisdom. Each imagery session was followed by a verbal report of the experience which was taped. Each participant was asked to keep a journal throughout the study and record any spontaneous thoughts about the experience. In order to explore the effect of wise woman imagery on self concept, the women were asked to complete the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS) before and after the four sessions. In order to gain an understanding of the participants perception of the meaning of the wise woman image, they were asked to participate in a structured interview at the conclusion of the study (See Appendix B) and to complete the TSCS as the wise woman would complete it.

Analysis of the Data

The data was collected from the psychological literature on guided imagery, the historical, anthropological, theological, and feminist literature on the image of the wise woman, the test scores on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale and the transcriptions of the data gathered from the theoretical sample. This data was subjected to content analysis, coded and arranged into theoretical concepts or categories, and further subdivided into elements of the concepts, or properties.

The focus of the second stage of analysis was on the explanation of the interrelatedness of the categories and the delimitation of the properties of each category.

The final stage of the analysis focused upon the establishment of the parameters of a theory about the meaning and function of the wise woman in guided imagery. In this stage of analysis the basic propositions of the theory were set forth.

Summary

The purpose and problem of the study is to generate a theory about the significance and function of the wise woman in guided imagery for feminist women. The assumption made

by feminist scholars is that an image of a wise, strong, protective, active woman will assist women in the development of healthy identities and will enhance their self concept. It will also enable women to look within for answers rather than to cultural prescriptions. Does this image function in this way?

This writer addresses the questions presented in the study by proposing that a study of guided imagery utilizing the wise woman image with feminist women will illuminate the common elements of the significance and function of the wise woman image for adult feminist women.

The procedures the writer employs are those established by grounded theory as explicated by Glaser and Strauss (1974). Subsequent chapters follow the outline of the procedures presented in this introductory chapter.

Chapter Two contains a review of the literature on guided imagery. It includes an historical overview and a description of trends and developments in the field of mental imagery.

Chapter Three contains a review of the literature on the wise woman. It includes an historical overview of matrifocal and patrifocal perspectives on the wise woman, a discussion of the re-emergence of the feminine and of the utilization of feminine images in guided imagery, and a review of feminist images of the feminine. The summary

focuses on the methodological and contextual contributions made by feminist scholarship to this kind of study.

Chapter Four is a discussion of the methods and procedures. It includes a description of the research method, the criteria for selection of the sample, demographic characteristics, the instrumentation, and the procedures and administration of all instruments.

Chapter Five contains a description of the function of various elements in the imagery, common characteristics of the wise woman, summaries of the imagery sessions and a summary of the results of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.

Chapter Six discusses the functions of the wise woman and of wise woman imagery. It presents an analysis of the data and a theory generated from the data as a set of theoretical propositions. Excerpts from the transcripts are utilized to illustrate the propositions.

Chapter Seven outlines and develops seven theoretical propositions and their implication for therapy. It concludes with a summary of the study, final conclusions regarding the outcome of the study and implications for further research.

CHAPTER 2

GUIDED IMAGERY

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Imagery, as illustrated by its frequent use in magic, religion, philosophy and literature, has been a prevalent and powerful element of the human heritage. In the pre-Cartesian era, the mind and the body were viewed as united by a biological soul. Consequently, imagery was regarded as a physiological as well as a psychological reality (McMahon, 1976) and was accepted and valued as a central process without question.

However, in the post-Cartesian era a major shift took place regarding imagery. Interaction between the mind and the body was no longer recognized. Consequently, views of imagery were reformulated. While the concept of the biological soul was no longer seen as central to an explanation of human development, visual imagery was still noted with interest, as early psychologists carried out introspective observation of their own stream of thought. However, the existing methodologies of research could not empirically demonstrate any function or usefulness of the

phenomenon. In the United States, Watson (1913) led a movement to study behavior through objective operation methods of research which banished the subject matter of states of consciousness as well as techniques of introspective observation. Watson specifically addressed the phenomenon of imagery and stated that it was no more than a ghost of sensation and had no functional significance. By the 1920's, "mental imagery began to fade as a serious subject for investigation and completely disappeared as a theoretical construct" (Richardson, 1969, p. ix) or it emerged under pseudonyms such as Hull's (1971) "expectations" or Mowrer's (1960) "self regulatory function".

In Europe the situation regarding the importance of imagery as a theoretical construct was different. Culturally conditioned by the work of Freud, Jung, and others of the Vienna Circle, European psychologists considered imagery one of the creative aspects of the unconscious and continued to study its process. The developing conceptualization of imagery was heavily influenced by alchemy and occult studies (Caslant, 1937).

In 1960, psychologists in the United States also began to develop active interest in the phenomenon of imagery, leading to considerable theoretical and applied research. This interest has become so widespread that in the last five

years the Journal of Mental Imagery has been established to promote and publish research and the International Imagery Association has been founded to serve as a forum for professionals in the field.

FIELD THEORY OF MENTAL IMAGERY

There are several areas in which theoretical and applied research are now taking place. These areas can be categorized as physiological, cognitive and therapeutic orientations toward the phenomenon of imagery. While the focus of this study falls within the therapeutic category, there have been some developments in physiological and cognitive research that may prove important to therapeutic applications of imagery.

Physiological Development

Some of the most exciting research has been stimulated by neurological developments such as direct stimulation of the brain, electroencephalography, and Magoun's work on the reticular activating system (Holt, 1964). Richardson has used the findings of some of these methods to conclude that imagery and perception are experimentally and neurophysiologically comparable processes that cannot be

distinguished by any intrinsic quality of either phenomenon. In fact, the locus of image excitation corresponds to the locus of sensory function in the brain (Richardson, 1969). Horowitz (1978) has summarized neurobiological influences of image formation, while Zikmunds (1972) has focused on physiological correlates of visual imagery. Evidence is currently being generated that supports the pre-Cartesian position that imagery is both a physiological and a psychological reality. Further evidence is being gathered daily as research methods continue to improve. For summaries of this research see Horowitz (1978) or Richardson (1969).

Cognitive Developments

Cognitive research includes such diverse topics as image formation, mnemonics and the role of imagery in creativity. Horowitz (1978) summarized the three classic issues of image formation as follows: 1) the usefulness of image cognition, 2) the differentiation of images from perceptions, and 3) the control of image formation. The scope of this branch of research is summarized by Sheehan (1972) and Horowitz (1978). The role of imagery in learning has been approached through the study of mnemonics (Titchener, 1945; Paivio, 1974; Reese, 1975; Hunter, 1956).

The use of images in perception and information processing is being undertaken by Marks (1972), Horowitz (1978) and Richardson (1969).

Some of the most exciting developments in learning and imagery are coming from Paivio (1971, 1973) and Sheehan (1972) in their work on encoding systems. Imagery is important in language, memory and thought to the extent that functional characteristics have been identified which distinguish imagery from the verbal symbolic process. Paivio (1971) and Singer (1974) are developing the theory of two parallel, interrelated encoding systems, one verbal sequential system and one imaging-spatial-parallel processing system. According to Forisha (1978), imagery is the starting point for creativity. Gowan (1964) has found imagery to be significantly related to creativity.

Therapeutic Developments

Imagery has been important for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes since the turn of the century. The reasons for its usefulness are threefold (Ireland, 1976). First, the close association of imagery to affective states facilitates the motivation of appropriate behavior through imaging various outcomes (Horowitz, 1970; Sheikh and Panagiotou, 1975; Singer, 1974). Secondly, images are less

likely than verbal constructs to be censored by the individual, thus providing diagnostic information and session focus (Sheikh, 1970; Horowitz, 1978). And thirdly, they allow for trial exploration of behavior (Sarbin, 1972; Sheehan, 1972). As a result, imagery facilitates processes that are utilized in all forms of therapeutic intervention. The view of the function and the role of imagery in human behavior and in therapeutic intervention differs according to theoretical approach. But the construct of imagery is present in some manner in all approaches to therapeutic diagnosis and intervention although it may not be explicitly utilized.

Wilkins (1974) conducted a survey of therapeutic imagery methods and concluded that there was no unified theory of imagery. In his view, therapists borrowed from those frameworks which most closely fit their own theoretical biases. However, Wilkins did identify three major theoretical categories which explain the function of imagery methods. These included Freud's position that the function of imagery methods served to uncover neurosis; Jung's (1961) notion that imagery was a life serving function which could be used to promote a life lived fully; and finally Wolpe's (1958) belief that imagery was a response to a learning paradigm such as systematic desensitization, and that imagery methods could be used to

facilitate learning.

The literature discusses analytical, cognitive and behavioral approaches to the use of imagery in psychotherapy. However, when imagery methods are construed as having been derived from a particular approach to psychotherapy and as functioning to facilitate the goals of that approach, the omission of the humanistic/transpersonal approach to imagery becomes apparent.

The interpersonal framework of humanistic psychology focuses on the use of both direct and indirect imagery techniques as a means to developing interpersonal competencies through enhanced self awareness. The goal of self-actualization leads theorists to use imagery to enhance individual awareness of the immediate present. The transpersonal framework is one in which the use of imagery methods is viewed as a means to facilitate the experience of and/or identification with a higher consciousness.

While the literature of psychotherapeutic approaches to mental imagery is comprehensive, any discussion of imagery is incomplete without consideration of two bodies of literature which focus on areas which go beyond psychotherapeutic conceptualizations of imagery. These bodies of literature are found in the writings of the New Age movement and Women's Studies.

The social phenomena known as New Age Consciousness has

brought together studies in physics, biology, medicine, eastern and western spiritual disciplines, and neo-pagan spiritual traditions to formulate a growing body of literature in the area of imagery.

The literature of feminist spirituality includes a major focus on the necessity for the development of positive female images which will validate women's experiences and facilitate the development of strong identities, self esteem and actualizing potentialities within women. Imagery is one of the major techniques for facilitating such personal and social change.

In the following review of the literature, conceptualizations of imagery derived from approaches to psychotherapy are presented and the function of imagery within each framework is discussed. In addition, the contributions of New Age Consciousness are briefly reviewed and the position of the feminist theoreticians regarding the function of mental imagery is overviewed.

Analytic Approach: The analytic approach to imagery focuses primarily on the role and function of imagery in the facilitation of intrapsychic, psychodynamic processes and emphasizes the unconscious processes. Freud and Jung

developed divergent positions regarding mental imagery.

In the psychoanalytic tradition, Freud (1895) viewed mental images as "primary process", a term he used to describe fantasies generated by the id to produce instinctual gratification. Since mental images were the only means available to the id for instinct gratification, they represented wish fulfillment and appeared in dreams and fantasies. Their function was twofold: they discharged the energy of unacceptable ungratified instincts and facilitated an awareness of instinctual needs which might be gratified by the ego through reality process. With this conceptualization of mental images, Freud viewed the utilization of methods to induce or observe imagery as a means of uncovering the contents of the unconscious and revealing the underlying neurosis.

As a result of his work with Breuer, who experimented with the use of hypnosis to alleviate neurotic symptoms, Freud's first use of imagery techniques was incorporated into hypnosis. Finding that symptoms returned and that the positive results were short lived, he soon became dissatisfied with hypnosis. However, clinical hypnosis remains a significant form of therapy and retains the use of imagery techniques to uncover past experiences.

In Freud's first formulation of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic technique, he continued to use imagery to

uncover neurosis. He later discarded these techniques when he decided that fantasy constituted a defense mechanism and that the imagery representing the instinctual wishes of the id were most effectively discovered through the utilization of dream analysis.

Building on Freud's thought, and using his original imagery association technique to assist in the uncovering of repressed material, Rehyer (1963) has developed his emergent uncovering method which is apparently the same as Freud's technique of free association.

The Jungian approach toward mental imagery has a very different focus from that of psychoanalysis. While Jung retained many of the psychoanalytical constructs developed by Freud in working with personal neurotic conflicts, there are major differences in Jung's view of the individual and of the psychodynamic processes.

Within the Jungian tradition, imagery is recognized as a life serving function (Wilkins, 1974). Rather than viewing images as merely representations of the instinctual wishes of the organism, Jung viewed images as emanating from both the personal and collective unconscious. As contents of the collective unconscious, images were viewed as symbols of archetypal figures which represented the best hopes and the worst fears of humanity throughout history as contained in the unique experience of the individual. Consequently, the

role and function of mental imagery within the Jungian framework is to bring the individual into direct contact with the collective unconscious.

Both Jung and Freud found dreams and fantasies to be rich sources of mental images. However, Jungian analysis uses imagery material found in waking and sleeping states to assist the client in attaining individual ideals and resolving personal conflicts. The facilitation of mental imagery also enables the individual to identify with and experience the unity of human consciousness throughout time. Jung was deeply influenced by Eastern Mysticism and acknowledged the possibility and the significance of mystical experiences. While this was not his therapeutic focus, he maintained that, through the facilitation of images, human beings could transcend both the personal and collective unconscious and experience a unity with the cosmic consciousness.

The early pioneers in the Jungian approach to guided imagery utilized a variety of approaches to induce mental images that would facilitate personality integration. To demonstrate the variety of specific methods and images, the following approaches are reviewed here: Jung's active imagination, Desoille's directed waking dream, Virel and Frétiigny's oneirotherapy and Leuner's affective guided imagery.

Jung's method of active imagination developed as a result of his personal introspection. He incorporated it into therapy as a way for his clients to continue their personal growth after concluding therapy. The method is not limited to visualization and may include art, acting, dance, and other expressions of imagery.

The active imagination process begins with the individual meditating without a goal. Images are invited and watched without interference though the individual often interacts with the images by asking them questions. The process is debriefed through sessions with the therapist or through journal entries (Samuels & Samuels, 1975; Crampton, 1974).

The images are considered to be archetypal and, when filled with emotion, symbolically express a situation that is important to the person's growth. This symbolic identification leads to integration of psychic components and to the transformation of negative energy (Jung, 1961). Active imagination results in "Wisdom Teaching" (Crampton, 1974) or in instructions from imaginary guides. Jung (1961) stresses the ethical imperative that one live up to the insights gained.

Robert Desoille (1945) is the originator of le rêve éveillé dirigé or the directed waking dream. Desoille's method includes relaxation, suggestions of appropriate

imagery, and observations of an individual's patterns. This is followed by an alteration of images of ascent (such as up a mountain) and descent (as into a cave) to arrive at new and more appropriate dynamic patterns. These scenes of ascent and descent are considered a major healing function of the imagery. Images of ascent represent sublimation and evocation of a person's higher ethical and spiritual goals. These experience are considered strengthening and reassuring. Images of descent are designed to encounter archetypal images of animals and monsters, representing the more primitive and instinctual human aspects. Desoille placed strong value on mystical experience, although only those mystical experiences encountered in ascent images were considered healing and transforming.

Oneirotherapy, advanced by Virel and Frétigny (1968), is a dialogic process similar to Desoille's method but more flexible and non-directive. To establish contact, the session begins with dialogue between the therapist and the individual, followed by relaxation exercises and mental imagery. The individual is asked to report the flow of imagery to the therapist as it occurs. Immediately following the session, the individual is asked to write about the experience. This material is used in later discussion. Homework assignments are frequently given based on the material that emerged in the session.

Virel and Frétigny stress the importance of vivid imagery connected to somatic states. For example, "Feel the grass beneath your feet..." is a common directive. While the therapist should be familiar with the technique of giving the patient an imaginary magic tool such as a wand, such devices are used only when absolutely necessary since their use might prevent the patient from coming to terms with specific conflicts (Crampton, 1974). Desoille, Virel and Frétigny all describe a mystic "light" experience which occasionally occurs spontaneously during a session. The latter point out that these experiences are often accompanied by a sensation of warmth.

Guided affective imagery was developed by Leuner (1969) and introduced to the United States by Swartley (1965) and Hammer (1967). After deep muscle relaxation is induced, the individual is encouraged to daydream on specific themes offered by the therapist. The process typically proceeds spontaneously from each suggested theme. Leuner developed a series of five techniques for evoking and interpreting imagery material. These consist of the training method, the diagnostic method, the associated imagery method, the symbolic method and the psychoanalytic method. Leuner employs a sequence of ten standard imaginary situations, all beginning with a meadow. During the diagnostic phase, the images may be reviewed rapidly. Later, they are reviewed in

Careful detail, allowing observation of any emotions associated with the image (Jordon, 1977). An important feature of Leuner's approach is that his systematic definition of concepts and procedures lend themselves to more formal research.

Cognitive/Behavioral Approach: Based on the "hard" data of empirical research, behavioral and cognitive theorists emphasize different functions of imagery from those described above. The behavioral school of thought places primary emphasis upon the role of imagery in conditioning responses through vicarious learning and in providing models for new behavior. Examples of therapeutic techniques relying on guided imagery are systematic desensitization (Wolpe, 1958), Stampf's implosive therapy (Singer, 1966) and aversive therapy (Cautela, 1966). The cognitive theorists emphasize the role of imagery in memory retention and focus on the learning of covert cognitive responses that preface overt behavior. For example, one might image oneself responding to a fear-producing situation with little fear, as a way of preparing to participate in the actual situation.

Bandura (1969) theorized regarding the importance of

vicarious learning processes and of symbolic modeling in the acquisition of new behavior. He postulated the existence of central mediation processes which are the cognitive processes through which the individual is able to learn new responses by imitating observed behavior. It appears that the central mediation processes provide for the encoding of the observed behavior in a manner that mediates the subsequent behavior of the individual. The results of studies conducted by van Hekken (1969), suggest that this encoding process takes place through imagery prior to being expressed as rules for behavior.

Humanistic/Transpersonal Approach: The humanistic school of psychotherapy draws on both analytical and behavioral strategies, but the function of imagery is viewed differently in that the humanistic framework recognizes its interaction with both perception and physiological systems.

Humanistic psychotherapy focuses on the interpersonal dimension of behavior and the self-actualizing process of the individual. As a result, imagery methods are used to foster the resolution of interpersonal conflicts and the self-actualizing potentialities of the individual.

Psychodrama (Moreno, 1967) and gestalt (Perls, 1951, 1970)

techniques are two illustrations of the functions of mental imagery within the humanistic framework.

Transpersonal psychology is the most recently developed area of psychotherapy. Within the framework of transpersonal psychology, images have played a primary role and are conceptualized much more comprehensively than within any other perspective. Not only are images cognitive/perceptual constructs and models for new behavior, they are also aspects of the self that are often hidden from the individual. In addition, the approach considers the possibility that the images may be a representation of the higher self. Transpersonal psychology has been heavily influenced by Eastern mysticism and has a spiritual facet that is concretely represented by the mental image. Through imagery, the individual can experience hidden aspects of the self, create or change life's contingencies, and unite with a higher consciousness in which the self is transcended. Transpersonal psychotherapists utilize methods of inducing imagery to explore intrapsychic dynamics, to foster self-actualization potentialities, and to assist the individual in achieving transcendence.

One model of transpersonal psychology is psychosynthesis, developed by Assagioli (1965). The aim of psychosynthesis is the establishment of a harmonious integration and expression of the totality of our human

nature. Imagination, in the precise sense of evoking and creating images, is an important psychological function which may be used for the specific purpose of psychological growth and integration. Symbolic visualization is the method developed by Assagioli and his student Gerard (1961). In this method, symbols or situations are provided for the individual to visualize, or spontaneous material is used. The individual is then asked to work with this symbolic material in ways that may alter the image itself and effect the associated psychological states represented by the image. Symbolic visualization techniques include controlled visualization of symbols posed by the therapist which are supposed to aid integration and visualization of somatic and affective states which occur during therapy.

Martha Crampton (1974), a follower of Assagioli, has refined and developed her thinking on the use of imagery into a method called Dialogical Imaginal Integration. Crampton sees psychosynthesis as a "psychogenic" (pertaining to the guidance of the soul) system that emphasizes forward movement rather than the elimination of symptoms. The imagery sessions are similar to those of Virel and Frétigny with some refinements. The initial image is allowed to develop without intervention from the therapist unless the image involves destructive acting out, at which time the therapist intervenes to effect reconciliation. Great care

is also taken to attend to "grounding", which is the process of relating what takes place at the archetypal levels to the everyday life experience of the individual. For example, the therapist may ask how the insights gained in the imagery session might be applied to a real life situation. This tool is used in conjunction with other therapeutic tools.

New Age

Ferguson (1981) believes that "the social activism of the 1960's and the 'consciousness revolution' of the 1970's seemed to be moving toward...social transformation resulting from personal transformation--change from the inside out." (p. ix) In 1976 she published an editorial on this transformation, calling it "The Movement That Has No Name." Since then, this "Movement" has come to be identified as New Age consciousness. New Age consciousness relies on a multi-disciplinary array of knowledge to formulate the major thrust of "change from within." The use of imagery has become significant within the field, especially as a result the research pioneered by Penfield (1975), Ornstein (1974) and others on the nature of human consciousness. This research has validated human experiences that were once considered mystical and "unscientific." Split brain research carried out by Penfield (1975) has demonstrated that images

critical to the functioning of mental operations (Ornstein, 1974) are stored in the right hemisphere of the brain, while the left hemisphere is usually dominant. These neurological findings have led to serious research in Eastern meditation. demonstrating the effectiveness of mental imagery for the alleviation of stress.

The use of imagery in New Age consciousness has been particularly popular in movements toward holistic health and self improvement. The relation between stress and disease demonstrated by Oyle (1974) has led to medical applications of mental imagery. Remen (1980) has developed a structured program using mental imagery with non-specific illnesses, while Oyle (1970, 1976) has successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of imagery with several diseases. Simonton and Simonton (1978) have pioneered the use of mental imagery with cancer patients to facilitate the activation of the immunological system with dramatic results.

A growing body of self improvement literature has developed that is directed toward widely disseminating knowledge about the powerful effects of imagery. These writings have served to promulgate mental imagery techniques that can be used without the assistance of a therapist or spiritual guide.

While popular early writings on the use of mental imagery by Maltz (1960) and Peale (1954) developed concepts

such as "success mechanism" or the "power of positive thinking" to describe the effects of imagery, many New Age consciousness writers utilize concepts which evoke a spiritual dimension (Wilbur, 1979; Ray 1976; Cole-Whitaker, 1979). For example, writers such as Progoff (1981) draw primarily upon Eastern mysticism and use mental imagery to assist individuals in rising above ego limitations and experiencing unity with the spiritual and the transcendent.

Another New Age consciousness approach is that of neo-paganism. Writers (Gawain, 1978; Adler, 1979; Bry, 1979) emphasize the capacity of the individual to change conditions of life through visualization, and view mental imagery as a tool one can use to become a co-creator with reality. In fact, Christians such as Agnes Sanford (1947) and Ruth Carter Stapleton (1976, 1977) have used this technique under the title "faith imagination" (Stapleton, 1977, p. 10) to enable persons to heal traumatic memories.

Feminist Conceptualizations

Spretnak (1982) places feminist spirituality within the cluster of spiritual approaches that stresses the intrinsic unity of all forms of being. This cluster of spiritual approaches includes native American spirituality, Taoism, Buddhism, Sufism, and natural philosophy as well as the

feminist approaches to spirituality. A central focus of this cluster is the notion that experiences of union with all other beings and with the One are accessible to everyone here and now. Spretnak (1982) refers to this cluster as the integrative or holistic viewpoint. In this framework, all experience is a source of wisdom and growth.

Feminist psychotherapists whose practice is informed by the belief system of feminist spirituality emphasize the importance of imagery as a source of wisdom and as a facilitator of growth and change. Drawing on the work of modern scholars who emphasize the importance of images in shaping the orientation of individuals toward the great powers, the world and their personal lives, these therapists assist women in refuting patriarchal religious images in developing new religious images derived from the experiences of women.

In addition, women are encouraged to utilize imagery and creative visualization to effect change in their lives. Combining psychological research on guided imagery and occult literature, Starhawk (1979, 1981) and Mariechild (1981) encourage women to visualize changes they wish to make and to carry out these changes. Budapest (1980) and Gawain (1978) subscribe to a metaphysical theory that begins with the words "as above , so below" and encourage the use of specific visualizations to create the conditions "above"

so that change may occur "below". While predicated on a particular metaphysical belief system, this is essentially the same technique that has been used successfully in medicine. In this sense, imagery techniques become one of the tools through which women have an immediate experience of their unity with other beings and with the oneness of the universe. In the hands of feminist therapists, imagery techniques function to assist women in creating concrete changes in their lives. These techniques also have a transcendent function in the lives of women.

CONCLUSIONS

There are three main areas of commonality indicated by this review of the various approaches to the use of imagery. Each approach has 1) a basic expectation that the use of imagery techniques functions in such a way as to enhance the coping skills of the individual, 2) a similar method of leading the imagery, and 3) a similar view of the therapist as a guide for the individual. These approaches to guided imagery share some specific expectations toward the outcome of imagery. Practitioners in every school of thought expect the imagery to be a remembered experience from which insight can be drawn and to which the individual can turn in the future. Imagery is also connected to the

future as a function of preparation for potential actions and for a reorganization of self perception. As such, imagery also motivates future behavior (Bower, 1977; Sarbin, 1972).

The leading methods of imaging have several commonalities. Bugelski (1971) has demonstrated that the relative immobility of the gross musculature system promotes imagery. In virtually every method, the imagery session begins with a relaxation exercise. Wilkins (1974) has pointed out that every method uses transition scenes in the imagery process to facilitate entry and return, such as walking along a path as an approach to the desired image and as a return to reality.

There are fewer commonalities in the degree to which the contents of the imagery are structured in different psychotherapeutic approaches. Désoille, Leuner and therapists practicing creative visualizations for the purposes of medical healing and/or personal growth encourage more structured contents. Jung and Crampton encourage a free flow of imagery.

The final stage, which is common to all systems of guided imagery, is the debriefing process. This process includes such activities as writing the experience, discussing it with the therapist and setting goals derived from the imagery experience.

In imagery sessions the therapist's role is that of the "guide." She\he is responsible for facilitating a relaxed state with the individual and for sustaining the patient's efforts during the imagery process. The therapist "guards" the narrative in order to intervene when necessary so the individual does not feel defeated by the contents of the imagery or abandoned by the therapist. Some of the specific functions of the therapist are to 1) inform the individual of the ground rules that govern the imaginal world such as "anything is possible" or "no harm can come to you", 2) focus the attention of the individual, 3) seek details the individual might otherwise miss, 4) draw the session to a satisfactory close, and 5) facilitate the debriefing.

This review suggests that the generic term "guided imagery" is a therapeutic method that is dialogic in nature, includes relaxation, imagery and debriefing. It leads to personality integration and motivation for making changes in behavior and living conditions. As indicated by this review, guided imagery has a long and well documented history. Experimental research has also demonstrated the usefulness of imagery techniques (Ireland,1976; Sarkisian,1975; Greckler, 1980; Sommer, 1978; Kosslyn, 1980; Smith, 1980). However, the use of specific symbols and images such as the vessel, sword or witch have been derived from theoretical assumptions, and the content of the imagery

has been interpreted according to the assumptions from which the images were derived rather than from the interpretation and experience of the client. Little research has been carried out to determine the meaning a particular image has for the individual or the experiential effect of that image for the client. The purpose of this study is to carry out an analysis of the associations and experiences women have in response to the image of a wise woman. From this analysis, hypotheses concerning common elements and individual variations in the experiences and meanings of the image of the wise woman will be formulated.

CHAPTER 3

THE WISE WOMAN

Images of woman are given and taken back in time by a great archetypal undercurrent that send seemingly new creations to wash up on shore, the way Aphrodite did, molded to move in the culture they arrive in. Some of these forms are always welcome (especially the Mother), while others appear to get lost, or to be hidden from view, or to be generally less accessible in non-receptive cultures. Two such forms hidden by the convolutions of recent history are the sibyl and the wise woman: Women who were the embodiments of specific powers of transformation that have been called magical, spiritual and psychic. These feminine forms still move among us. But where and in what form? What guise does this aspect of feminine nature assume in the Age of the Fathers? (Hall, 1980, p.161)

Acknowledgement of the values of the feminine have been as changing as modern weather patterns, yet always emerging. This section will briefly summarize: 1) the recent recognition of a possible matrifocal period of history; 2) some of the theories attempting to explain the invisibility of female wisdom; 3) recent recounts of the surfacings of the wise woman or her counterparts in history, focusing most strongly on the contribution of modern feminists; 4) the use of female figures in guided imagery; and 5) Feminist contribution to the method and context of this study. The purpose of this survey, which is limited to

western civilization literature, is to provide the historical and theoretical context that led to the selection of the wise woman as a potential image to enhance women's spiritual and psychological growth.

Matrifocal Perspective

Johann Bachofen, writing in 1861, is credited with the modern theory of social development which maintains that the first period of history was matrifocal (Bachofen, 1967). By assembling the evidences of the matrifocal system from all of the people's of the earth and utilizing the tool of "mythopoetic creativity" (Campbell, 1971), Sir James Frazer independently developed a theory of a period which he called the age of Mother Right. He believed this period was antecedent to that of Greek and Roman partriarchal systems by 1890. Both of these theories were formulated prior to recent archeological discoveries which have given more credibility to this theory. Other early writers who focused on this theme through their treatments of the Mother are Robert Brifault (1927) and Eric Neumann (1963).

The first contemporary feminist mythmaker to discuss on the implications of an earlier matrifocal society was Elizabeth Gould Davis (1971) who used the method of mythopoetic creativity in her analysis of the significance

of ancient female oriented societies. Adrienne Rich (1976) points out that Davis' work should be approached as "a catalyst of memory and imagination rather than as a document of unshakable fact" (p.79). This comment applies to much of the current work on this theory, since it can be neither verified nor disproved. Rich (1976) points out three reasons for this ambiguity: 1) Much of the evidence was lost through neglect or destroyed by superceding groups; 2) Much of what we do have has been preserved through patriarchal scholarship; and 3) The evidence from the pre-history period is difficult to interpret and subject to bias.

While Davis' work cannot be proven, neither should its importance be underestimated, as it was the first attempt by a contemporary scholar to create a counter image to the prevalent patriarchal society. There is growing archeological evidence of a period in which woman was venerated in various aspects, goddess worship prevailed and myths depicted strong, revered female figures. But Rich suggests that the historical accuracy of the existence of this period may not be as important as the psychological value of imagining such a time and thereby encountering the primal power inherent in being born female. In recent years many more explorations of the possibilities and implications of ancient matriarchal cultures have been explored by writers such as Merlin Stone, When God Was a Woman (1976),

Marija Gimbutus, Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe 7000-3500B.C. (1974), and Monica Sjoo, The Great Cosmic Mother of All, (1981).

Growth Of Patriarchy

Archeological evidence relies on interpretation. We don't know the historical extent of matrifocal cultures or the meaning artifacts had to the women living with them, and neither do we know the cause or nature of the changes in social organization that resulted in modern day patriarchy. Rich (1976) has summarized the reasons Engels, Fox and others have suggested for the change. Engels (1971) believed that male dominance evolved from the possession of private property. Robin Fox (1967) concluded that, as a result of the long childbearing phase, men assumed a "protective" role in the natural division of labor. She herself, suggests that, since men cannot give birth to children, they contribute to culture to gain value. To support this premise she reminds us of: 1) Bettelheim's observation that male initiation rites are an outgrowth of male envy of female reproductive power; 2) Karen Horney's suggestion that phalocentric thinking is residual envy and resentment; and 3) Campbell's theory that men tried to break control of and employ the magical force and wonder of the female to his own

ends. In her more recent writing (1980) Rich suggests that the changes resulted from male fear of the possible loss of women in their lives.

Feminist theologian Rosemary Reuther (1983) has taken another approach by suggesting that the origins of male monotheism, a dominant force in the submersion of the feminine, lie in the emergence of a nomadic herding society that lacked the female gardening role. God was imaged as sky-father. Or perhaps another explanation proposed by Rich offers more insight: the negation of women is an attempt to kill the dragon, the dark side (death) of the Great Mother.

However the patriarchal society evolved or developed, it is clearly our present situation. Exploration of any of the above themes or others may lead to insightful mythopoetic creativity that may in fact be empowering, such as June Brindel's novel Ariadne (1980) which recreates the overtaking of Ariadne, the last Matriarch of Crete. Elizabeth Fischer (1979) has used this method to explore the possibilities that culture was entirely formed by women rather than by men in her book Women's Creation.

Much of this work is discounted by its very reliance on the mythopoetic creativity method but this is one of the only methods open to women who live in a society so thoroughly saturated by patriarchy that it is an unacknowledged assumption. It is only by asking the

questions that have not been asked before (such as: where were the women and what were they doing when...? What were their contributions to culture? How are women affected or enculturated by patriarchal assumptions?) that we have been able to uncover the patriarchal bias in history. The fact that questions concerning the meaning and functions of the wise woman are presently being explored at all, is due to the daring of such women as feminist theologian Mary Daly (1973, 1980), psychologist Anne Wilson Schaef (1980), sociologist Elizabeth Fischer (1979) and others (including many anonymous women) who, in the last 15 years, have challenged the patriarchal bias. The feminine surfacings summarized in the next section have primarily been recognized, claimed and written about within the past 13 years.

Surfacings Of Female Images

While it appears that the submersion of the feminine and the female was deliberate in some instances, all of the evidence has not been destroyed. Christ (1979) suggests that as women begin to reinterpret history, models for the wise female in the images and symbols emerge. She cites the figures of Sophia, Wisdom, Mary, Kali, Demeter and Persephone as examples (Christ, 1979). Many of the tales

associated with these models of female wisdom provide a starting point towards developing a woman's story of life. Charlene Spretnak (1979) has pointed out that there are major differences in the pre-Hellenic and Olympian versions of myths and that when pre-Hellenic versions are considered roles of women and the role models for women are dramatically changed.

Feminist theologian Rosemary Reuther (1983) weaves one of the possible scenarios on the change of power and the remnants of female wisdom. Reuther asserts that the concept of the goddess as the primal matrix or ground of being has never completely disappeared from religious imagination. The goddess was first paired with gods in Sumer and Babylonia and these myths still remain. Reuther points out that in the Christian tradition, Yahweh battles Baal, the male consort of the goddess. Yahweh's victory led to the absorption of the goddess into a new relationship with Yahweh as Lord. The myths thus change the nature of the sacred marriage from goddess/king to God/servant-wife (Reuther, 1983). Even some of the female attributes such as mercy and compassion are appropriated by Yahweh in this change. In the Wisdom tradition, the female image mediates the work and will of God to creation. Eventually the Holy Spirit picks up many of the associations of Sophia (wisdom), Hokmah (wisdom) and Ruach (spirit). The Gnostic tradition as

well as many mystics such as Dame Julian, John of the Cross, Theresa of Avila and Catherine of Siena used feminine images to describe God. Mary bore the burden of being the theological personification of psyche and Mother Church is the Bride of Christ and Mother of Christians (Reuther, 1983).

Nor Hall (1980) has focused her search for the wisdom of the female and the feminine in secular tradition. She notes that the old wise woman is regarded as the teacher of 'song, story and spindle'; she is wisdom herself, spinning and weaving the thread of life. She suggests that the wise women were the fairies and witches of the fairy tales, such as those in Sleeping Beauty. They are the midwives and the bringers of death; they assist in times of difficult passage. They are always autonomous, sometimes benevolent, sometimes terrifying-- or both. Hall also suggests that the wise women were servants of the gods, consultants to the kings and wanderers, and midwives such as Hekate.

Contemporary writers appear to be drawn towards both the images of the Great Mother and the wise woman. Sometimes they are equated because of a lack of images. Certainly, these images may fulfill overlapping roles. Much of the recent focus has been on the archetypal nature of the feminine psyche drawing on analytical tradition (Neumann (1963), Harding (1981), Ulanov (1971), Whitmont (1969), and

Wolff (Ulanov, 1971)). In Wolff's discussion she considers the archetype of the Medium as a representation of feminine wisdom.

Feminist Contributions To Wise Woman Images

Feminist formulations of female images have not directly focused on the concept of the wise woman. However, one source of wise woman images is the witch traditions that are currently being reclaimed by some women. Mariechild (1981) describes Wicca as the craft of the wise ones or witches, who are characterized by having powers arising from a particular kind of knowledge, as in the case of the wise women who knew the curative powers of herbs. Rabuzzi (1979) points out that a witch exists in her own right and her identity is not derived from male figures.

Some writers (Adler, 1979; Starhawk, 1982) trace the witch tradition to goddess worship, since witches often worship the female creative force in the form of the Great Mother or goddess. The reclaiming of the goddess tradition has been one dimension in the development of feminist theology. Christ and Plaskow (1979) explain that this is not an attempt to create a new image of the eternal divine but to suggest a reality that validates females and makes growth and change possible. Goddess worship that has its

roots in ancient witchcraft provides female symbolism for modern women but women who participate in Goddess worship recognize that these images are invented as much as remembered.

In her essay of the same title, Carol Christ (1979) explained "Why Women Need the Goddess". She believes that the Goddess is affirmation of female power, female body, female will and female bonds and heritage. Some of the images for this emerging goddess tradition are derived from studies of the prepatrilarchal roots of mythology such as those developed by Spretnak (1979), Rich (1976), Chesler (1972), Luke (1981), and Hall (1980) exploring the relevance of the Demeter/Persephone myth and the Eleusian Mysteries for modern women. The quarterly journal Womanspirit is dedicated to women's spirituality through contributions on the relevance of myths, goddess images and female experience. The popularity of goddess images as a source of inspiration is indicated by the large number of books surfacing on goddesses in the 1980's, such as those by Sjo (1981), Perera (1981), Thorsten (1980), Wolkstein and Kramer (1983).

A major event in the developments of women's images, that specifically includes wise woman images was the publication of the Motherpeace Tarot deck and handbook (Noble, 1983). One of the wise woman images is that of the

High Priestess who is the archetypal feminine receptive mode of consciousness. She is daughter (Artemis), Mother (Selene) and Crone (Hekate). The crone is the wise old woman whose powers include divination, healing, midwifery, and the secrets of death and renewal. "She is the guardian at the Gate" who sits between the pillars of opposites providing equilibrium and balance on our journeys through the unconscious. The High Priestess symbolizes the female body as vessel for the holiest of mysteries and divine experience available to the human body (Noble, 1983, pp.36-40). The Norms of the justice card are wise old women "learned in the old customs of the ancient precepts of right and wrong" (p. 71). They are women who participate in the total reality around them through "knowing without conceptualizing" (p. 72). The Crone is the wise woman who watches over our dreams and visions and who whispers secrets in our inner ears. As midwife to the psyche, her function is to "assist people who are no longer where they were and not yet where they hope to go." (p.76) In the past five years feminists have drawn on many sources to provide women with images of personal selfhood and power. The Motherpeace Tarot deck draws together many of the images suggested by others into a unified conception of the wisdom inherent in the feminine.

Most of the references to the wise woman are brief and without detail. But occasionally stories of the wise woman

are told with due attention to detail. Anne Cameron (1981) ends the secrecy of many generations to write about the 'old woman' of the nootka tradition. The old woman was once copper woman, a survivor who endured long enough to be sent knowledge and guidance from the 'old ones.' When her time had come full, she passed her wisdom on to her granddaughter and ate a last meal with her family. Then she "said the words, sang the songs, danced the dances and prayed the prayers...and became a spirit. She became old woman. She turned her bones into a broom and a loom."

With the loom she weaves the pattern of destiny.

With her broom she sweeps clean the beach
and the minds of all women who call on her

She became part of fog mist and night wind
she became part of sea spray and waves
she became part of rain and storm
she became part of sunshine and clear sky.

She became part of night and part of day
she became part of winter and part of summer
she became part of spring and part of of all
she became part of all creation.

With her loom and her broom
with her love and with her patience
she weaves the pattern of destiny
and sweeps beaches and minds
she weaves the pattern of reality
and tidies shorelines and souls.

She will never abandon you.

Wise Woman Images in Guided Imagery

The development of strong female images for women has not been prevalent in the history of guided imagery. While female images have been present in a minor way throughout that history, the images have been those dominant in a patriarchal culture such as lover, mother and wife. Jung (1961), the developer of the form of guided imagery known as Active Imagination, was also the originator of archetypal theory. He created the archetype of the great mother which has dominated the feminine archetypal thought but he also recognized the witch and mermaid, among others as aspects of the feminine archetype. In 1964 Weaver published an entire study called The Old Wise Woman: A Study of Active Imagination. In this work, he did not attempt to develop the archetype of the wise woman since his purpose was to demonstrate the use of active imagination using a series of dreams and imaginings as his example.

Desoille (1968) developed standard images that he used as a series in guided imagery. Among these are three images that focus on issues related to women. The first imagery was that of a vessel which was intended to shed light on the woman's understanding of her femininity. The second image was to encounter a figure representing the mother by descending into a cave to find a witch or sorceress. The

third image was intended to assess the oedipal situation via a sleeping beauty image. However, Desoille has not presented his rationale for his choice of these images to accomplish the related goals. Neither is there evidence that the symbols in fact represent what they are claimed to represent to the women themselves.

Leuner (1977) used the image of an ideal personality of the same sex which he found to be successful in his work. In psychosynthesis, Stuart Miller (1975) developed a Dialogue with the Higher Self. This dialogue was based on the assumption that there is an inner wisdom that can be tapped and brought into dialogue through imagery. He entitled this imagery the "Wise Old Man." In his footnote he states that "some people spontaneously visualize a wise woman but that the wise man or sage is the most readily accessible symbol of inner wisdom....The results of employing the symbol of the wise man and wise woman are likely to be different and complementary. Experimentation is advised (p. 126)." No further discussion is provided.

The "Wise Old Woman" does appear as a guided image journey in Diane Mariechild's book Motherwit, (1981). The image is used as a way of assisting women to connect with their inner wisdom through conversations with the woman following an image of ascent (p.78). Starhawk, in her book, The Spiral Dance (1979), describes the wise woman in the

"Waning Moon Meditation". In this imagery the wise woman possesses an awareness of the wisdom of evolution stored in every cell of the body. She knows "her own power to end, to lose as well as to gain and to destroy what is stagnant and decay" (p.79). Wisdom lies in the knowledge that " life feeds on death--death leads on to life" (p.79). Hallie Iglehart's (1983) exercise on working with an inner guide is also an encounter with the wise woman. The inner guide is the "imaginary" personification of the wisest, most centered part of ourselves. It is a personification of one's own unique knowledge. She says, "Contacting my inner guide is an immediate experience of my own strength, resourcefulness and creativity, and it is especially important as I change my self-limiting conditioning as a woman" (p.43).

Summary

Images of female wisdom have been suppressed but never extinguished, as is evidenced in this brief overview of female images of wisdom and power. This section has demonstrated that modern women are seeking images and models of female wisdom and strength. There is much theoretical foundation for the usefulness of such an image for women's spiritual and psychological growth.

Feminist scholarship in particular has broken some of

the barriers that have prevented the emergence of strong female images in at least three ways. The first is that the feminist pioneers have given women at large permission to use female formulated images of womanhood and power. Questions such as "What were the women doing when....?" are culminating in research that is taking a fresh look at history and the role of women that was omitted by male recorders. This is providing women with stories and models and with the model of asking questions of themselves and of society.

The second contribution made by feminist scholarship is that of providing a process of identifying strong female models in the past and present and of identifying strength in our present selves. This has sparked the imaginations and courage of other women to seek their own images of power.

The third contribution is that the process and context is deemed more important than the content of a specific image. Thus it is not necessary for a particular image of the wise woman to dominate or be "the right one." Thus, the specifics of the wise woman images of the past are less important than the fact that there is recognition of the importance and value of such an image. The focus on process and context rather than content is what contributes to the broader spiritual significance of the image. It allows and

encourages acceptance of self and others despite different image content through a shared process and experience and thereby expands a woman's sense of connection to and participation in the world.

However, this theory needs to be validated by women's experience. Does the wise woman image in fact function in the way that has been proposed? This needs to be explored or the wise woman image can be subjected to the same critique leveled at guided images used in the past--namely, that they do not function in the way the originator claims. The rest of this paper is an initial study that will demonstrate the significance and function of the wise woman through an exploration of women's experiences with this image.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Grounded Theory

This study on the meaning and function of the wise woman in guided imagery is based on Glaser and Straus' method of Grounded Theory (1967, 1978). Their theory, which developed the technique of comparative analysis, was originally designed as an approach to sociological inquiry. Since the publication of their first text, The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967), this technique has been widely adapted by other disciplines because its primary goal is the systematic generation of theory from data. Comparative analysis generates conceptual categories and their properties from the evidence and then uses the evidence to illustrate the concepts. This is different from simple descriptive studies and from attempts to verify hypotheses based on logical a priori assumptions.

Theory must fit the data, have relevance and workability, and it must be readily modifiable, based on emerging notions from new data. Comparative analysis

results in two main elements of theory: 1. emergent categories and properties and 2. hypotheses or generalized relationships among categories. This is done by coding the data line by line, comparing the differences and similarities among specific experiences and reactions to arrive at possible categories of experience. Further coding is done within each category and between categories, until all of the data is integrated into the categories and properties which describe the categories. Sometimes this means changing conceptual categories to use all of the data. A category is considered to be saturated when no new properties are being added by the continued sorting of data. If a category does not saturate, then more research is called for in that particular area for theory generation. Memos are written throughout the process of gathering, coding and sorting data. The memos include insights, observations, possible questions and interrelationships between the experience. Thus, grounded theory is a process of simultaneous data collection, coding and analysis with the purpose of generating theory.

Data coding is governed by several rules. The first is to ask questions of the data such as: "What does this data indicate?"; "What does this category indicate?"; What are the experiences that this data summarizes?" Secondly, the data is analyzed line by line until the categories emerge

and saturate. This is not an "overview approach." The analyst always does her own coding, and coding is always interrupted to note ideas and observations. Memos should be as complete and free flowing as possible, as they are later used for theory development and analysis (1982, pp.56-60).

Frequently the data are collected from various groups or members of a single group, as is the case in this study. The criteria for sample selection are based on theoretical purpose and relevance. Since verification is not the goal of this study, the sample does not need to be randomly selected. Usually new samples are studied as needed to develop incomplete categories or to answer emerging questions. Data gathering continues until the major categories are saturated, so that no amount of additional data adds new dimensions to the category. While many studies focus of one dimension of a problem, such as the cause, care is taken to ask questions from the broadest possible range of theoretical perspectives. For instance, What are the causes? What is the context? What are the consequences of things happening this way? What is the process? What are the values? Approaching the data from as many perspectives as possible increases the possibilities of insightful emergent theoretical propositions.

Theoretical sorting is the phase of the study in which the memos generated during the coding phase are sorted into

a theoretical outline. It is a sorting of ideas rather than of data. This is the step that produces an integrated generalized model from which to develop theory, because it establishes the relationship among variables. The process is to identify the core variable, sort conceptions and continue to maintain memos. This study is the initial phase of a larger research project and, as such, the goal is to facilitate the emerging of categories that will be the basis for future exploration. Thus, depth of experience and data collection are needed at the beginning of the study. Therefore, as homogeneous a group as possible has been chosen in order to generate basic categories and verify the usefulness of categories.

Study Sample

In order to make this sample as homogeneous and as theoretically relevant as possible, five women participants have been selected through network analysis wherein one woman meeting the criteria identifies other women she thinks also meet the criteria. The criteria for selection were that each woman be in her 30's, have some education beyond her undergraduate degree, be currently living a middle class lifestyle and identify with the feminist movement. It was also expected that each woman would have had some experience

of guided imagery.

This theoretical sample was chosen based on the assumption that women who have already responded favorably to the feminist movement would be more open to the effects of a strong woman image. The education level was to insure their ability to conceptualize about their experience. Current middle class lifestyle and age groupings was to facilitate the selection of women with similar cultural background. Future studies (see the summary for future research possibilities) will use different sample selection variables in order to discuss the relevance of this experience to persons of different life experience.

Demographic Characteristics

The women ranged in age from 32-38 years. Two were married, two single and one divorced. Three of the women had children. One woman was lesbian and two others were exploring bisexuality or lesbian lifestyles. All of the women were in the process of obtaining master's level degrees, two in counseling, two in theology and one in business administration. Two were employed full time and three were employed part-time. Childhood religions included Roman Catholics (two), conservative Baptist, Church of the Brethren and Disciples of Christ. Present religious/

spiritual affiliation included Disciples of Christ, "woman religion," "goddess religion," Buddhist leanings, and none. Each woman chose her own name for the purposes of this study: Bess, Cali, Karris, Kieran, and Tree.

Procedure

Each of the women was asked to participate in a study of guided imagery utilizing female images. They were told that the study would consist of a pre-and post-test of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale(TSCS), four individual, one-hour sessions of guided imagery, keeping a journal in between sessions, and a final interview lasting not more than two hours. All of this was to be completed within a given six week period. Each session was individually conducted.

The TSCS was administered at the beginning of the first session. Following its completion the guided imagery (Appendix A) was read by the researcher with pauses as indicated in the text. The guided imagery included relaxation, traveling on a path, and being drawn to the dwelling of a wise woman. The participant was encouraged to ask questions of the wise woman, to become the wise woman, and then return to her self. As the participant was leaving she was told that the wise woman was giving her something to

take with her. She was asked to stop along the path to inspect what she was given before returning to usual waking reality. The image used in each session was exactly the same. Wisdom was the only attribute given to the woman appearing in the images.

The guided image took 27 minutes. At the end of the imagery the woman was asked to share her experience with the researcher. Care was taken to report the experience in as rich detail as possible. Questions were asked for clarification but not for analysis of the experience. This part of the session was taped and transcribed for purposes of data analysis. Memos were made at the end of each session noting the dynamics of the session, impressions and questions of the researcher and occasional comments that were not on tape.

At the beginning of the final interview session each woman completed a post-test of the TSCS. She was then asked to retake the TSCS once again, filling in the TSCS as if she were the wise woman. It was suggested that she focus on one wise woman in particular or use a composite of the wise women in her imagery journeys. This was followed by the final interview (Appendix B) designed to gain the woman's interpretation of her experience with the guided images. The women were asked to reflect on the personal significance of each element of the image (such as the path, the

dwelling....), how the various images fit together, the relationship of the images to their daily lives and their spirituality.

These data were then coded and analyzed according to the guidelines of grounded theory described above. An item analysis comparing the pre-test, post-test, and wise woman test responses was completed for each item of the TSCS for each woman individually and for the group collectively. The standard TSCS scoring was also used to compare each woman's three tests and the group scores. The analysis of this data follows in the next chapter.

Instrumentation

The Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS) consists of 100 self-description items, of which 90 assess the self concept and 10 assess self-criticism. The 10 self-criticism items were all taken from the Lie Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). For each item, the respondent indicates on a five point Likert-type scale the degree to which she agrees or disagrees with statements, such as "I have a healthy body" or "I am a friendly person." The response choices range from completely true to completely false.

The self-concept profile is based on a fifteen-cell

matrix with five columns on aspects of self and three rows on identity (who I am), satisfaction (acceptance of self), and behavior (how I act). The aspects of the self are physical, moral, personal, family and social. Half of the items related to each cell are worded positively and half negatively (Fitts, 1965; Knox, 1977).

	Physical self	Moral- ethical self	Personal self	Family self	Social self
Identity (Who I am)					
Satisfaction (Self-acceptance)					
Behavior (How I act)					

TSCS is considered to be useful in working with both clinical and nonclinical populations. It had been employed in more than 500 studies in a variety of settings and populations by 1973 (Fitts, 1973). In addition to measuring various degrees of self-concept which are important to this study, it also has the advantage of being self-administering and can be completed in 15-30 minutes.

The content validity of the TSCS has been derived from surveys of literature on self concept and from client self reports. The items included in the test were selected by seven clinical psychologists who were asked to classify each item according to how it exemplified personality constructs

shown above in the 3 x 5 matrix. Only those items on which the judges showed perfect agreement were included on the final instrument. Several scores on the TSCS have high correlations with other standardized personality instruments, in fact many of the test items were derived from other personality tests. The optimum self-concept profile of persons judged to be well integrated and unusually effective in their occupational and personal lives is characterized by scores indicating high self-esteem, good personality integration, moderate defensiveness and self-differentiation, low conflict and variability, and low indication of pathology (Knox, 1977). The test was further validated when the predicted differences between groups of psychiatric patients and nonpatients, delinquents and nondelinquents, and average persons and persons judged to be psychologically integrated were confirmed (Fitts, 1965).

The test-retest reliability on the TSCS was conducted using 60 college students who were administered the instrument twice over a two week period. The reliability coefficient for the total positive score was $r = .92$, indicating good reliability. Subscale reliability coefficients reported for all the remaining scales ranged from .80 to .90 (Fitts, 1965).

The standardization group from which the norms were developed was a sample of 626 normally functioning adult and

college age people from various parts of the country, ranging in age from 12-68 years old. An equal number of males and females represented all social, economic, and educational levels from 6th grade onward. Researchers concluded, "Samples from other populations do not differ appreciably from the norms, provided they are large enough samples (75 or more)" (Fitts, 1965, p.13).

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The material presented in this analysis of data has been derived from 212 pages of transcribed interviews following 4 individual guided imagery sessions with each of 5 women (20 imagery sessions), personal interviews with each woman and three administrations of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale(TSCS). All of these data were collected within the same six week period. The TSCS was administered prior to the first imagery session and again prior to the final interview, which was scheduled a full week after the last imagery session. The third testing, which requested that the interviewee answer as the wise woman would, immediately followed the second. This presentation of data will include a description of the functions of the elements(i.e., path, dwelling) in the images, a composite summary of the characteristics of the wise woman, a summary of the imagery journeys of each of the five participants and the results of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.

Function of Imagery Elements

This section focuses on the rationale for constructing the guided image in the way it was and on summarizing the prominence of various elements in the imagery. The following chapters will discuss how these elements actually functioned for the participants.

The relaxation exercise was designed to facilitate the letting go of the tensions and demands of the world brought into the imagery session. The relaxation of the gross musculature system promotes imagery.

The path is a transition scene used to facilitate entry into and return from the image. In this series of images, 14 paths were wooded, 2 were near the ocean, 1 was above the ocean, 1 was in the ocean, 1 was in the desert and 1 was on the city streets.

The dwelling served as the setting in which the meeting with the woman of wisdom took place. A specific but nondescript setting was included to reduce the confusion of choice that often happens when no setting is suggested. No details were given that would inhibit the creative imaging process. For one woman this dwelling was unchanging, except in detail, throughout the entire series. Two other women experienced the dwelling as being the same in the first two or three sessions, after which it changed. The dwelling

changed in each session for the remaining two women.

Dwellings imaged include 9 wood cabins, 2 caves, 2 living tree houses, a thatch hut, a stone cottage, a womb, a Japanese pagoda, a dome, a bubble, and an amusement park.

The woman of wisdom's function and role in the imagery will be explored in depth in chapter 7 since this is the image under exploration. No other qualities than wisdom were attributed to the wise woman in order to simplify interpretation and limit the focus of the study.

Asking questions of the wise woman gave structure to the interaction when needed. This suggestion was followed in 75% of the images. In the other sessions the interaction developed differently; there was interaction but the participant did not ask questions of the wise woman. For example, the interaction was described as being simple presence or as an activity such as playing together or hugging trees.

Becoming the woman of wisdom was implemented by the participants in 50% of the experiences. It provided a shift in perspective in the experiences. This was reported as the best part of the image for some and as the most difficult for others. When this element of the imagery took place it facilitated insight and awareness of the concern and acceptance of herself by the woman of wisdom. Often, the woman experienced herself as somehow different upon

returning to the role of the visitor.

Leave taking was intended to raise questions about the availability of the wise woman, clarify the emotional connection between the two women, and raise issues as to the relationship between the participant and the wise woman. There was some expectation that the wise woman might be seen as a part of the participant but this was not built into the image as the participants were left free to relate to the wise woman in their own way. This openness in the image was to see how the relationship between the participant and the wise woman would be conceptualized.

The gifts were to be as concrete symbols of the truth conveyed or the lesson to be learned or a means crystalizing the lesson of the experience. While it is difficult to understand the significance of the gifts out of context, they included such things as a handful of corn, a scroll containing a poem, a nautilus shell and a box made of bark containing an ice cube.

Portrait of the Wise Woman

Each participant was asked to take the Tennessee Self Concept Scale three times. The third time she was asked to answer the questions as one of the wise women she had imaged would answer. An item analysis of the individual questions

on the TSCS identified the similarities and differences in the participants' understanding of the qualities of the wise woman. Everyone agreed that the wise woman would be healthy, satisfied with her life, her relationships, her body and her spirituality. She would take full responsibility for her own life and allow others to take responsibility for their own lives. She wouldn't have the need to change or control others. Her relationship skills came from a strong sense of self rather than from a need to please others. She was trustworthy and exhibited a personal willingness to grow. She was viewed as being more popular with women than with men. Neatness and friendliness ranged from moderate to very much so. There was significant disagreement (from always to never) as to the degree to which a wise woman would get angry or laugh at dirty jokes. There was also disagreement about the extent and nature of the relationship to her family.

An analysis of the imagery sessions indicated that in every instance the wise woman was accepting and even welcoming of the visiting woman. The wise woman was felt to be nonjudgmental, able to listen well and to understand. Her presence conveyed communication and the gifts were felt to be "just right" for the needs of the visiting woman. The wise woman was independent and living alone but was not lonely. Usually there was evidence or mention of a broader

community involvement. Physically, the wise women were most often described as being ageless, physically and spiritually strong, of varying heights and weights, having beautiful eyes and wearing natural fibered clothing. Possessions were few but enough and usually handmade.

Summary of Participants' Experiences

In this section, the imagery experiences of each of the participants (Kieran, Bess, Cali, Karris and Tree) will be summarized. This is followed by a very brief summary of each woman's shared understanding of the meaning and usefulness of her experience. An attempt has been made to capture some of the impact of the experience as well as document two major events that occurred for each. Themes will be developed in Chapter 6.

Kieran, Session 1: This journey began on a wooded path ending at a stone cottage. Kieran felt the presence of the woman before she became visible. She described her as being powerful and purposeful. Kieran asked questions about work and its meaning and received the sensory impression (nonverbal) that silence would lead to clarity which would be manifested in purposefulness and concentrated effort in

her work. Following her experience of becoming the wise woman, she reported feeling calmer because she had shed some of the clutteredness she had brought with her to reveal a quietness that was already a part of her essence. The gifts were an olive bead and a purple heart bead, which had family and spiritual connotations.

Session 2: This path was on an island not far from the ocean. It led to a thatch hut. The wise woman was a Mexican Indian, almost Mayan in appearance. Kieran again asked questions about work and the woman responded with some impatience. Its meaning was simple. "Just sweep the dirt floor." Kieran's questions about death brought the metaphoric response that it is the "same as planting corn." The message of the imagery was understood to be that all life is simple. Just sweep, plant, watch the sun rise and sit and fish. Kieran remarked on the contrast between the clarity of the woman's life and her cluttered life. The gift was a handful of corn.

Session 3 was set in a cave in a desert canyon. This dwelling was especially remarkable because of the amount of burnishing that had been done on the tile floor. The wise woman was strong and powerful. Questions about work were answered with the response that you can do everything if you do one thing completely. The woman said she was not lonely because there were other women living in the same canyon.

Kieran experienced the wise woman's life as one of building and creating. The gift was a ball of fired, burnished clay.

Session 4 was set in a wood and glass house overlooking the ocean off a snow covered path. The wise woman was writing at a table as Kieran entered the dwelling. The conversation focused on relationships and work. The wise woman indicated that she had friends but had chosen not to have a couple relationship. She wrote because she felt it to be her calling but it was not important whether or not other people read her work. The wise woman was glad to have company but she didn't "need" it to fill any gap in her life. Kieran was given an unformed piece of lead.

Summary: Kieran viewed these women as persons who "embodied integration" on many levels of life. She drew heavily on the theme of simplicity. The questions about work were integrated into the conclusion that it is not work in the sense of job that was important but one's "life work" is what is important. The purpose of life is to be a "life artist." Kieran described her experience with the imagery journeys as "going very deep, being quiet and surfacing with a new constellation and feeling tone."

Bess, Session 1: The path through the woods ended at an

outhouse. This dwelling was the entrance to a round, pink, moist and somewhat sticky room where Bess began to play by rolling on the walls and floor. The wise woman emerged later and watched her play. Then they went outside where the two of them began to care for the plants and trees by hugging them. At one point the wise woman was hugging Bess as Bess was hugging a tree. As Bess was leaving she wanted to give the woman some of her play; when they touched hands, the woman shared her energy with Bess, which manifested in light purple clothes which would never come off. The longer Bess wore these clothes, the darker purple they would become. Someday, Bess knew she would share them with someone else as well. Her gift was the purple clothes.

Session 2: Bess was running along a wooded path near the ocean and came to a Japanese pagoda in the trail. The woman was white and nebulous. Bess asked why she was there. The woman replied that she had been there a long time and that it was a safe place for women to be. The woman inside the structure then blew up and clung to the structure and wouldn't come out. Bess saw this as a trap and left but she tried to get the woman to leave as well by pulling and talking but the woman refused. As Bess ran off she heard the voice of the woman inside become like that of a young whiny child. She ran to the ocean, where she laid in the sand with the surf rolling over her as she thought

that this (on the beach) was where women should be, not in the pagoda. She brought back permission to be angry at women's situations and at the men who, through culture and tradition, put them there.

Session 3: The path was a plexiglassway into the ocean, leading to a white dome supported by 8 pillars. Bess found she was able to breathe in the water and swam and played among the pillars. The woman appeared in a white gossamer robe and began stretching and moving. Bess asked why she was down here and the dome rose to the surface of the water so they could look out over the ocean to the land, which was purple and orange. The woman said the land had been destroyed. They returned to the ocean floor and Bess became the woman. She was pregnant and full. She began pushing and pushing, giving birth to a variety of things that were left to grow on the ocean floor. When Bess returned to herself she also experienced herself as pregnant, but drab. The woman blessed her body, touching her breasts and genitals and saying that birth would be easy for her. Bess left and floated in the ocean as she awaited her time to begin giving birth. She brought back the blessing of her body and an awareness of herself as giving birth to things in her life.

Session 4: The pier always appeared under her feet as she stepped, although she couldn't see it as she walked. A

bubble appeared at the end of the pier. The bubble pulsated, small and big, small and big. There was a smaller bubble inside the larger bubble that Bess entered. There she and the woman danced and played. At one point the bubble became big, so big it seemed to encompass the earth. At other points the woman sang to her and held and comforted her. Bess didn't want to become the wise woman because she didn't want to have to do the nurturing the woman was doing for her; she wanted the comfort. The woman gave her a flute as a means of giving joy to others since Bess couldn't sing. She went out onto the pier and played to the fish as they swam and jumped to her music.

Summary: Bess saw the images giving her permission to have and be and do all of the things she had wanted, such as wearing purple, giving birth, loving women, and being angry. She realized that she could have given herself permission to do these things but that she somehow still needed permission from someone else.

Cali, Session 1: This imagery began on a wooded path that led to a dwelling in a living tree. Cali asked for assurance that everything would be okay. When she became the wise woman, she "checked into that side of herself that

has faith in the okayness of things." After that experience she felt calmer and comforted. The woman gave her a plant with three blooms, one bud, one in full bloom and one wilted, which Cali understood to represent the flow of life.

Session 2: The path and the dwelling were the same as above. The woman was Cali's version of the woman she is currently doing therapy with. Cali asked how to best confront her parents about her childhood incest experiences. After receiving guidance she became the wise woman and felt calmer. She also respected Cali for the struggles she was going through. Cali left the woman with the self knowledge that things will be okay because she is okay. The woman gave her a nautilus shell from which Cali derived a sense of perspective. She observed that in the beginning the little shell must have seemed very heavy to the animal living in it but as it grew and moved into other compartments the relative weight would change. What was once a burden will become lighter with growth and time.

Session 3: For the first time ever, her imagery with the woman moved from the tree house to a regular log cabin. The woman moved easily and with grace. Cali explained her plan regarding her upcoming conversation with her parents and the wise woman suggested she try to be flexible in her desired outcome. When Cali became the woman, she felt some

loneliness because of the lack of "presence" in Cali as the visitor. Cali realized she was so busy talking "about" what was coming up that she wasn't really present and interacting in the present with the wise woman. When she returned to her own role, she asked how to become more present. The wise woman told her to observe nature and she was given a meditation pillow. She reflected, "Meditation is being entirely present with oneself. Perhaps as I am more present to myself I can be more present to others."

Session 4: The path again went through the woods but ended near the entrance to a cave. Cali felt great energy circling in her 2nd chakra (abdomen) as she went into the cave and saw the woman. The wise woman was dressed in animal skins and had uncombed hair. Cali asked the woman to comb her hair or else she would leave. After the woman combed her hair, Cali asked her how she should take care of herself right now and was told to take time apart. The woman conveyed a mental picture of a healing setting. As the woman, Cali realized the woman's need to move more into connection with others. The woman gave her a crystal symbolizing perspective.

Summary: Cali found that the imagery experience brought her into contact with the part of her that "knows." She recognized patterns of self abuse and began trying to be more present with herself and to cultivate the still core

within. She saw herself changing old patterns from within as she became more able to hold the life perspective of birth, life, death and rebirth.

Karris, Session 1: Karris followed her images along the same path to the same cabin in all of her images. This was the same path and dwelling she had used in her images before. She was almost "shocked out of the building" when it was suggested that this was the dwelling of a woman rather than a man. This was a great relief to her but she had not thought of the possibility before. The woman was very friendly. Karris asked if she liked living alone. Did she like living without men? The answer was yes, the woman was not lonely. She had many animal friends. As the wise woman, she felt compassion for Karris but no need to control or change her. Returning to her Karris role, Karris began to cry to have such a place of refuge. The wise woman assured her she could come back anytime and told Karris she loved her. The parting gift was a hot biscuit with butter and honey in a burlap bag that would heal and nurture her.

Session 2: This time the woman was smoking a pipe when Karris came in. Karris asked about a bear that was in a "wise woman image" she did alone at home because it frightened her so much. The woman replied that Karris no

longer had anything the bear wanted. At the end of the image, they hugged; the love was implied but not spoken. The woman gave her a box made of bark containing an ice cube. Karris was delighted to have it to suck on as she went down the path in the midday sun. The bear came once again. She showed it the ice cube and the bear left uninterested.

Session 3: The woman greeted Karris, helped her to dry from the rain and served tea. Karris again asked about the woman's feelings about living alone. The wise woman asked her if she was having trouble with her spouse and if she was considering living alone, a show of concern which didn't pressure Karris. As the woman, Karris felt a sense of power, quietness, and centeredness. The woman was independent, self-reliant and conveyed deep warmth. She knew Karris did not yet have the sense of deity that conveyed such warmth. At Karris' request the woman gave Karris some oysters and a scarf which she tied on her head to keep the rain off. Karris used the scarf for a potholder when eating the oysters down the path and marveled at how the woman always knew all that she would need.

Session 4: The day was very hot and the wise woman was washing herself as Karris approached the cabin. She then threw the water onto the animals standing on her porch. She brought water for Karris to wash as well and, with the

woman's permission, Karris also splashed the animals. The woman said, "You're troubled." Karris replied "Yes" and went to sleep. As the wise woman, she felt grateful and compassionate since she knew the sleeping woman did not enjoy the peace she had. Upon waking, Karris asked the woman what her one flaw was. The woman explained that because of her love and compassion she was easily hurt, which is why she was accessible only to Karris. As Karris was leaving, the woman told her to hold out her hands and asked what was there. Karris replied, "Nothing." The woman said she was giving her imagination. She then threw water at Karris and the image shattered. In the distance Karris heard childlike laughter. The melodramatic closing Karris had expected had been shortcircuited and Karris was left with the gift of her hands and her imagination.

Summary: The presence of a woman instead of a man in the dwelling, together with some other insights gained about the bear (which will be explained in Chapter 6) were causative in Karris' improved acceptance of her own female identity and improved self-image. She observed that as she felt the acceptance of the wise woman towards her, she was better able to accept herself and others, especially her spouse, without trying to control or change them.

Tree, Session 1: The wooded path led to a cabin where she met a woman she expected would have a long skirt, cotton blouse and long hair. Her experience approached sleeping so it was intermittently "spacey." She didn't ask questions because the presence of the wise woman was more important than anything she could think of to ask about. In the moments of being the wise woman Tree felt a great burden of responsibility. When it was suggested that the woman would give her something, Tree first determined what the meaning would be and then the gift. She decided the meaning would be that the basic truths of life are so simple they would fit in a thimble. The gift was a silver thimble with etching on it.

Session 2: Once again the experience was so close to sleep that Tree floated in and out of the image, most of it was described as the kind of experience that can't be described. The woman gave her a scroll with a poem about life's meaning on it. Tree began to wonder why it was she felt no connection with the wise woman and immediately was overwhelmed with a feeling of the woman's love and concern. This meditative experience of being in the woman's presence led Tree to reflect on her childhood memories of God's love.

Session 3: Images of a woman with long hair and a cotton skirt alternated with those of a woman with short

hair in farmer jeans. As Tree tried to accept the image of the woman in jeans it changed back to the former woman. Tree asked what she was suppose to learn in this life. The wise woman replied that the answer is found everyday or would unfold more each day. When it was time to say good-bye Tree touched the woman's hand, held it and kissed it. She wanted to give her a hug but felt it was inappropriate. She remarked that it was strange to have an intimate experience or discussion with a stranger. The woman gave her a white daisy which communicated that the important things in life are all around us and are free for the asking.

Session 4: In this session Tree's images were more spontaneous and less consciously controlled than they had been in earlier sessions. The path went along a city street and ended in the amusement park where she met and simply walked around with the woman. At some point there was the sensation of riding a roller coaster but she didn't know how this fit into the image. She felt herself to be basking in pure presence. This presence was her gift since everything else had already been given. Because Tree felt this~~s~~ presence in the park meant she could find that sense of presence anywhere, even out in the world. The wise woman had, in a sense, brought her back into the world.

Summary: Tree's themes focused on presence and her

belief that the meaning of life is very simple. The experience enabled her to remember what she often forgets and to keep her life on course by reflecting on her own values.

TSCS Results

The TSCS is a standardized personality inventory designed to evaluate levels of self-concept through the self perception dimensions of self esteem, self criticism, variability, certainty and conflict. It is considered to be a very stable instrument with a reliability rating of .88. It was not expected that 4 weeks of wise woman imagery would be sufficient experience to significantly change the participants' self-concept scores but it was hoped that tendencies might emerge that would be useful for theory building. This section describes the nature and meaning of the inventory scores, provides a profile of each of the participants and of the wise woman as derived from the mean scores of the participants. This is followed by a discussion of the results. See Appendix C for graphs of the participant's scores and the mean scores for each of the three testings.

The Nature and Meaning of the Scores. This section

summarizes the meaning and basic interpretation of each of the major TSCS scores. The interpretation information utilizes the terms "high score" and "low score" which mean that the scores fell outside the range of "normal" scores. The normal range is indicated on the TSCS profile sheet. Usually they are scores in the uppermost and lowermost 5 or 10 percentile. All of the following information has been drawn from the TSCS Manual (Fitts, 1965).

The Self Criticism Score (SC) is derived from 10 mildly derogatory statements that most persons agree with. High scores generally indicate a normal, healthy openness for self-criticism. Low scores indicate defensiveness that may result in an artificially high Positive score.

The Total Positive Score (P) is the single most important score on the instrument as it reflects the overall level of self-esteem. Persons with high scores "tend to like themselves, feel that they are persons of value and worth, have confidence in themselves and act accordingly" (Fitts, p.2). The P scale is subdivided into an internal and an external frame of reference. The internal frame of reference measures 1. Identity (who I am), 2. Self-satisfaction (how I feel about myself), and 3. Behavior (what I do). The external frame of reference measures feelings about the Physical Self, Moral-Ethical Self, Personal Self, Family Self, and Social Self. If the Self

Criticism Score is low, high P scores become suspect and are probably the result of defensive distortion (Fitts, 1965, p.2).

Variability Scores (V) measure the amount of inconsistency from one area of self perception to another. High scores indicate that there is little unity or personal integration. Well integrated persons tend to score below the mean but above the first percentile.

The Distribution Score (D) is a summary score of the way an individual distributes answers across the five available choices. High scores indicate that the person is very definite about what she says about herself. Extreme scores are undesirable and are most often obtained from disturbed persons.

The True/False Ratio (T/F) indicates whether the subject's approach to the task involves a strong tendency to agree or disagree regardless of item content. A high T/F scores indicates the "individual is achieving self-definition by focusing on what she is and is relatively unable to accomplish the same thing by eliminating or rejecting what she is not" (Fitts, p.4). Scores in the middle ranges indicate that the individual achieves self-definition by a more balanced employment of both tendencies-- affirming what is self and eliminating what is not self.

Conflict Scores indicate discrepancy between positively and negatively worded items within the same area of self-perception such as the score that reflects the identity level of our physical self. Net scores in which the positive scores are greater than the negative ones indicate the individual is overaffirming positive qualities. When the negative scores are higher than the positive ones it indicates the individual concentrates on denying the negative. High total conflict scores indicate confusion and contradiction.

There are also six empirical scales which were derived from an item analysis of specific groups of people (psychotics, neurotics...) who tested differently than the norm. The Defensive Positive Scale (DP) is a more subtle measure of defensiveness than the SC Score. The General Maladjustment Scale (GM) differentiates psychiatric patients from non-patients but does not differentiate one patient group from another. The Psychosis Scale (Psy) differentiates psychotic patients from other groups while the Neurosis Scale (N) identifies strong neurotic tendencies. The Personality Integration Scale (PI) is based on score comparison with persons judged to be outstanding in personality integration and adjustment. The Number of Deviant Signs Score (NDS) is a count of all deviant features on all of the other scales since disturbed persons tend to

have many extreme scores. Fitts states that this score alone identifies deviant individuals with an 80% accuracy (p.5).

Participant Profiles. Kieran. The first test scores are moderate and fall well within or near normal expectations for everything except the empirical scores. SC and P scores on the first test were at the 30 percentile with Identity and Family Self scores being lower than the normal range. Distribution was very low indicating some hesitancy in the strength of her judgments. All of her empirical scales except the Defense Positive Scale (DP) were above the normal range with the greatest deviation on the General Maladjustment (GM) and Psychosis (psy) scales.

The second test closely followed the first except Self Criticism (SC), Variability (V), Distribution (D) and Total Positive (P) were somewhat higher than those of the first test. The rest of the scores paralleled each other with the second testing being slightly higher than the first in all areas except Identity and Neurosis.

The wise woman testing showed a low SC, high P, moderate V and high D. The sub scores of P were significantly higher than the first two testings especially in Self-satisfaction and Physical Self. The lowest scores

were on the Identity, Family Self and Social Self scales. The wise woman had a much lower Personality Integration Score (PI), similar N and PD scores but high DP, GM and Psy scores. In fact the Psy score went off the graph. Yet the NDS was within normal range.

Bess. The pretest scores were moderate at the 45th percentile. There was a slight tendency to eliminate the negative as reflected by the -20 net conflict score so the P might be a little high. The P subscores were all within normal range. V and D were low. The GM and Psy scores were well above the normal range while DP and PD were normal. The N scale was also somewhat higher than normal.

The post test SC and P scores were somewhat less than the first while the tendency to reduce the negative was reduced. All scores fell within the normal range except Identity. D increased slightly as did the GM and Psy scores.

The wise woman's P score was higher than the pretest and the SC was lower. D was substantially increased. All P subscales were significantly higher than the pre and post test except the Personal Self which was about the same and the Social Self which was lower. The wise woman was still above expected normal on the GM and Psy scales but lower than Bess' pre-and post-test. No significant change on the PI or NDS.

Cali. The pretest SC score was normal but the P was quite low (300 out of possible 450). The P subscales fluctuated around the lower edge of the normal range with Identity, Behavior, Physical Self, Family Self and Social Self falling below normal. V was low but D was very low indicating little confidence in judgment of test items. The GM scale was the highest score above the range of normality but the Psy, PD, and N scores were also above normal but PI was at the 50th percentile. NDS was a little high.

The post test changes were dramatic. SC remained constant. P went up 50 points. The entire range of the P subscores moved up 50 percentiles but kept a similar shape to the first test. D was also markedly improved showing more confidence in her choices. The GM, Psy, and PD scores also went up, making them even further away from expected normal scores. PI went down as did the NDS.

The wise woman had low SC and substantially higher P scores. All of the P subscales were significantly higher than the post-test yet still within the normal range. The shape of the distribution paralleled that of the pre- and post-test. There was a dramatic increase . . . the D score while the V remained constant. The GM and N scores remained constant while the Psy score was higher and the PD score was lower than previous already high levels. PI remained very low.

Karris. The pre-test SC and P scores were moderate and all of the P subscales fell within normal ranges. The lowest score was the Family Self. D and V were both moderately low. The empirical scales of Psy and PD were higher than normal but GM and N were very high. A high negative net conflict score also indicates some distortion present in the P score due to defensiveness.

The post-test SC was much higher than the pre-test and the net conflict score was greatly reduced. This was reflected in a slightly lower P score and slightly lower P subscale scores though they all remained within normal limits. The Psy score remained constant but the GM, PD and N scores dropped significantly though they still remained above normal. PI also went down.

The wise woman had a very low SC score and a moderately high P score. All of the P subscales were significantly higher than either the pre-or post-test except the Family Self. D and V became abnormally high. There was significant increase in the DP and Psy scores such that the Psy score went off the page. PI was much lower. NDS remained within normal bounds.

Tree. The pre- and post-test SC and P scores were moderate with the post-test being slightly lower. The curves closely resembled each other with the post-test curve being slightly lower. V and D were moderate for both with

the post-test again somewhat lower. The empirical scores were nearly the same with the GM, Psy, PD and N scales being higher than normal. PI was low and NDS was moderate.

The wise woman had a much lower SC but higher than normal P indicating possible disturbance but the net and total conflict scores were very low indicating a high level of integration. The P subscales were significantly higher in every instance with Self Satisfaction and Personal self higher than normal distribution. V was much lower while D was much higher. GM, PD and N scores remained constant but high while the DP increased significantly and the Psy went off the scale. PI decreased dramatically and NDS remained within the normal range.

The Wise Woman Profile. The wise woman profile was taken from the mean scores of the five participants. The pre, post and wise woman curves parallel each other in shape and differ only in magnitude with the second testing being slightly higher than the first testing and the wise woman scale being significantly higher than the second testing in all but the GM, PD, and N scales. SC was much lower and the P was 50 points higher. V was slightly higher and D was significantly higher. PI was significantly lower and NDS fell within the normal range.

Discussion. A review of the graphs in Appendix C and the above data indicates that the wise woman is a role model. Further, there is a tendency for post-test scores to move towards the values modeled by the wise woman. (The one exception to this tendency is that the SC score moved away from the score of the wise woman in four of five instances which may suggest that self criticism was slightly stronger when the participants viewed themselves in comparison to the wise woman. This interpretation is not so easy since two of the pretest SC were abnormally low and the post-test higher score probably indicated more self honesty.) Of these two indications the wise woman as role model is most important since she function in this capacity for each of the women individually as well as collectively. It is especially interesting that the wise woman curve approximates the shape of the pre-and post-test curves. This suggests that the qualities of the wise woman are projections of the participant's self concept.

There are many indications that the participants viewed the wise woman as having a more stable personality than they attributed to themselves and thus she makes an effective role model. Her net conflict is nearly 0 and total conflict is very low. There is a high distribution of

responses indicating greater surity of responses and variability is below the mean. All of the P subscale scores fall within normal limits above the 75th percentile with the exception of Identity which was at the 70th percentile. The T/F ratio is nearly 1. The NDS is well within normal limits.

From the discussion so far it appears that the movement of scores towards those of the wise woman is a positive movement but it must be considered that the movement indicated in this study may not be substantiated in the feminist population at large. The sample size is too small to make a prediction or even to build a theory. This movement of scores towards those of the wise woman is demonstrated by the mean scores but not by each of the individual scores. This movement was very true for Cali and somewhat so for Kieran. In fact opposite movement took place for Tree and Karris while Bess' responses were mixed. This is an instance where quick viewing of graphs may not lead to the richness of the data. Karris did not move in the direction of the wise woman's scores but her second test did show a corrective to her earlier negative net conflict score which indicates she had developed a more realistic image of herself even though it was reflected in slightly lower scores. The same was true of Kieran to a lesser degree. Thus it is more appropriate to suggest that the wise woman

facilitates a more realistic or improved self concept depending on the needs of the individual. This proposition needs further research.

But the most interesting results of this series of tests are the questions raised by the unusual distribution of the scores on the empirical scales. The distribution is further confounded by the normal range distribution of all other scores. This discussion is confined to the mean findings since they reflect the situation of each woman. What is the significance of the mean participant scores appearing outside the normal range of distribution on the empirical scales? Why are the GM and Psy deviations so much greater than the other empirical deviations? Why does the wise woman Psy score go off the graph? What is the significance? Why is the PI score of the wise woman so much lower?

In many ways these questions are beyond the scope of this theoretical project or at least they raise so many questions that they cannot be answered without much more extensive research. Yet it is our theoretical task to explore the possible significance. The GM score is a general index of adjustment-maladjustment but it provides no clues as to the nature of the pathology (Fitts p.5). Fitts does not provide a description of the distinguishing characteristics of the Psy scale but according to the

DSM-III psychotic indicates gross impairment in reality testing. "The individual incorrectly evaluates the accuracy of her perceptions or thoughts and makes incorrect inferences about reality, even in the face of contrary evidence (p.368). It usually includes delusions, hallucinations or other impaired mental functioning such that the person was unable to meet the demands of life due to poor reality testing.

Neurosis is a mental disorder in which the predominant symptom is distressing to the individual and is recognized by her as unacceptable and alien; reality testing is intact. Behavior does not violate gross social norms (DSM-III, p.364). A personality disorder implies inflexible and maladaptive patterns of behavior in the way one relates to, perceives, and thinks about the environment and oneself (DSM-III, p.366).

The unspoken distinction between psychotic behavior and neurotic behavior or personality dysfunction is that impaired reality testing which characterizes psychotic behavior is defined by society while neurotic behavior and personality disorders are defined by the individuals perception.

The DSM-III psychotic description does not apply to any of the participants in the wise woman imagery study or to the wise woman. The only element the women had in common

with each other and with the wise woman was their feminist orientation. While feminism is often considered radical, could it be that the philosophical system of feminism is so different from that of the existing patriarchal system that it appears their reality testing is impaired from the popular point of view? Are the wise woman's PI scores so low because of the difference between the wise woman's values and popular social values? If this is so, is the goal of therapy or growth acceptance of the cultural norms or change that calls for further change in the society? It appears that the women in this study are more comfortable with their personal values and self concept as characterized by their appropriate SC, P, D, V and DNS scores than society is comfortable with their values. The participants PD and N scores were more normal than the GM and Psy. This observation may also call into question the theoretical bias concerning the nature of the well integrated personality that underlies the formulation of the test instrument. Perhaps the philosophical differences between feminism and patriarchy are so much greater than those between classes, sexes, age groups and races that there is a new subgroup that needs to be taken into account in personality measurements.

CHAPTER 6

THE FUNCTION OF THE WISE WOMAN

Who is the wise woman? What qualities does she embody? What expectations do we have of her? What are the processes through which she impacts women's lives? Do the imagery experiences influence, affect, and reflect daily life? How? These are the questions which will be discussed in this chapter.

The Wise Woman

Chapter 5 contained a description of the wise woman as summarized from the TSCS item analysis. In this section, the discussion will focus on the relationship between the wise woman and the participants. Who is the wise woman to them? How is she the same or different? Is she viewed as being an extension of the participant, or is she someone other? What are the qualities she embodies that allow her to function in these capacities?

The image of the wise woman was derived in different ways by each woman and sometimes in different ways by the same woman. In some instances she was the compilation of

known women who had impacted the participant's life. A couple of exceptions to this approach are imaging a representation of a single important woman, such as a therapist, or drawing together a compilation of images found in literature and visual media. For one woman, the wise woman was an expression of "my not knowing and yet my knowing what really was."

Variations in the formation of the wise woman's identity were then reflected in the participant's understanding of her relationship with the woman. In one instance the wise woman was seen to be so perfect that "basking in the presence of this woman" was the most important experience in the imagery. In this instance the wise woman was seen as someone "radically other" who "is human but has risen above the rest of us in that she is closer to perfection." In most instances, however, there was an integral connection between the wise woman and the participant. "The woman is an extension of myself that I am not often in touch with." "She is always me and I am always her...there is interaction but we are not two separate entities." "It is impossible to leave her. We can be apart but we are not separate." "We are not the same person but I don't leave either since she is a part of me still there." "There is an identity with her and yet I am separate from her." Usually the participants recognized that in some way

the wise woman was a projection of the participant's personal wisdom which accounts for the sense of connectedness. Variations in this understanding were reflected in whether the wise woman was viewed as an external or internal source of wisdom, but in either case she was viewed as a "way to self-love and acceptance."

Regardless of the participants' understanding of their relationship with the wise woman, they all shared the view that her presence and her way of being in the world were her most outstanding features. This presence included the attributes of unconditional acceptance, compassion, and an understanding of the interconnectedness of everyone and everything. In every instance, the woman was reported to have both physical and spiritual power, purposefulness that was not controlling, and internal clarity and centeredness. There was also a high frequency of earth mother images which portrayed the wise women's integral connection with and care of the earth and all of its creatures, including the participants.

Other qualities of the wise woman emerged less frequently, but no less powerfully. Bess's woman, who dwelled in the water following the destruction of the earth, was not only a survivor but was also a creator in the sense that she was giving birth to all forms of life and leaving them on the ocean floor to mature. The theme of creating

also emerged in the concept of being a "life artist." Further qualities included contemplation, total individual responsibility and free will. Qualities that added rich texture to the portrait of the wise woman included her sense of humor, as experienced by Karris when the wise woman exploded the image by throwing water on her; her wildness, as shared with Cali in the cave; and her nonhierarchical nature.

The Functions of the Wise Woman

The qualities embodied by the wise woman explored above are important because they create the feeling tone that allows the wise woman to be particularly effective in giving guidance, sparking insight, raising issues and giving permission to explore new behaviors. These are the four functions that emerged from the data coding and sorting. In this section, each of these functions will be explored and illustrated.

To Give Guidance or Comfort: The guided imagey was designed to facilitate participants' asking for guidance or advice. This structure was utilized particularly effectively by Kieran and Cali. Sensing her wisdom, the participant asked the wise woman some question that was important to her. Each of these visiting women had a life

issue she wanted clarified, and each time the wise woman contributed something to the participant's understanding of that issue. Kieran focused her questions around the meaning of work and how that fit into life. The answer came back that silence would lead to clarity about work, which would lead to purposefulness. The meaning of work is found in tasks such as sweeping the dirt floor. You can do anything if you do one thing completely. Everything is your work; there is no separation between work and the rest of what is done in life; it is all your "life work." Cali used her sessions to get guidance on her planned confrontation with her parents about her childhood incest experiences. Other participants, who did not follow this suggestion literally, also received guidance on occasion but this was not their primary form of interaction with the wise woman.

The wise woman often functioned as a source of comfort and affirmation. For Karris, it was especially important that she feel wanted and welcomed by the woman of wisdom. It was important whether the door was already open, whether there was a fire in the fireplace and tea already made as though she were expected. In the first session tears were prompted by the realization that, for the first time in her life, she had a refuge. Tree preferred to bask in the presence of the wise woman. Bess was cradled and sung to. The giving of guidance and comfort helped to give definition

to the participant's life journey or to encourage her on the way. The guidance function was characterized by more verbal and logical interaction than any other function. Comforting took place through welcoming gestures, physical holding and assurances.

Sparkling Insight was facilitated in the participants in one of three ways: 1. through metaphoric communication, 2. by the behavior or presence of the wise woman, and 3. through reflection on the gifts given. An example of the use of metaphor to spark insight was the woman responding to Kieran's question about the meaning of death by saying, "It is the same as planting corn." The point was emphasized by giving Kieran a handful of corn kernels.

The fact that the wise person was a woman rather than a man is an example of insight being sparked by the woman being who she was. Prior to this imagery experience, Karris used imagery that included the same path and dwelling but the dwelling was that of a man. It had been a frightening experience because of implicit sexual tension.

"I could never identify with the man but when you said woman, it just blew me away. The fear was gone. I could identify with that imagery--a very independent woman with wisdom, just a neat person. It just blew me away because this is somebody I could be all the time.....When I left the cabin I wondered if she had built it...cause if she had there wouldn't have been any male influence in that imagery at all."

Reflection on the meaning of the gifts was the source

of Cali's insights. Receiving the meditation pillow sparked the insight that meditation is a means of being fully present to oneself. In learning to do that, she could learn how to be present to others. After receiving the nautilus shell in her imagery, Cali bought one for herself. Her further reflection on its meaning led her to the realization that it was her own shell which she had been carrying around all of her life. Now she was ready to emerge from under it, to live her life more freely, and yet let the shell remind her of where she had been.

To Raise Issues: Not all of the interaction with the wise woman was pleasant. There were many occasions in which the imagery journeys brought attention to personal and often painful issues. At the very least, the surfacing of these issues demanded decisions to change or to postpone change. Some issues arose through cognitive reflection on the experience. Others came to light in much more startling ways in the imagery. Sometimes it was the first articulation of the issue, sometimes the participant had known about the issue for a long time though the participant only talked about it when the interviewer asked direct questions as in issues of sexual identity and preference.

Tree's issues came to light as she reflected on her experience as it was happening. After she received a poem from the wise woman, Tree began to wonder why she didn't

feel any relationship to her. This wonderment was immediately followed by the sense of being completely loved and accepted. "Then there was the sense of relationship that I remembered feeling when I was a child about my relationship to God, the loving God that takes care of you and cares about you." After the imagery, Tree began reflecting on how God was considered male and on whether or not she had had a relationship to the Blessed Mother. She speculated that perhaps she didn't have a feeling of relationship to the wise woman because she never really had a relationship with Mary. Later that same week, Tree reported confronting herself about never having thought about a female image of God even though she is woman identified, thinks of the earth as female, and associates the power of life with women. Tree reported, "It makes more sense to think of God as she. I wondered if I would feel more comforted in my relationship to God, or whatever, if I thought of it more as 'she'?" This imagery was the beginning of a long term reflection process.

Issues were raised in various ways. Cali became aware of her lack of really being present to and interacting with the wise woman when she became the wise woman and felt the woman's loneliness. She understood that loneliness to be the result of her (Cali) being so concerned about the past and future that she wasn't really interacting with the wise

woman in the present. Bess was confronted by her problems with her father when she was reflecting on the imagery in which she was given a flute. She felt that playing the flute showed off her fingers, which she didn't like because they were like her father's fingers. She chose not to work with that issue right now, and instead threw the flute back into the ocean in a self-induced imagery session. However, she also acknowledged that the tides would return it to her someday when she might be more willing to work on that personal issue. This issue was discovered only when the interviewer inquired about the absence of references to the flute in the final interview. Other issues were similarly discovered by careful listening and questioning in the final interview.

The final illustration is the surfacing of a long standing issue that had been previously insoluble. The example is lengthy but it demonstrates how working with symbolic images appearing in imagery can lead to personal breakthrough.

Karris was so excited about the presence of a woman in the cabin instead of a man that she used the same image at home that night. A bear appeared in the image and frightened Karris when it talked to her. In the following session she asked the woman about the bear and was told that she no longer had anything the bear wanted. The woman then

gave her a box containing an ice cube. When the bear approached her on the trail, Karris showed it the ice cube and it went away with an expression of utter disappointment. At the conclusion of the session the interviewer wondered out loud "What is that bear about?" In the third session Karris proudly reported she had done her own therapy with the bear image.

"The bear is a sexual fantasy. As a child, I masturbated with a teddy bear and my mother used to catch me at it. Working with the bear image was helpful in terms of understanding my sexual growth and development.....I recently went through some therapy with a psychiatrist trying to understand how a previous psychiatrist had been able to seduce me. We concluded therapy with his saying that it would take a very long time to get at the issues. But now I know. The first psychiatrist became the bear in my fantasy. He became the teddy bear in order to seduce me. Teddy bears don't tell and I couldn't remember. He was the only person I told about my masturbating and he took on that image and seduced me. That was the link I couldn't find....Then I didn't have anything the bear wanted. I was a virgin but once that was gone I was nothing more to that man. He had already satisfied himself at my expense... It was a freeing experience to finally make the connection, to put the links into place. I have been troubled by that for 15 years. I went to a psychiatrist, a hypnotist...trying to find out what happened and how. His body became the bear. I was very naive and frightened."

To Give Permission: One of the self learnings that was articulated by three of the participants was that they still looked for permission to do things from external sources of wisdom. The wise woman functioned as a permission giver but the imagery experience also functioned as a way of encouraging the participants to give permission to

themselves. The permission granted simultaneous empowerment to the participant. Permission was granted to know, to do, to have, and to be.

The whole experience gave the participants an opportunity to recognize that on some level they know what they don't know. The images broadened their sense of what they already know, and strengthened the participants' belief that they could act as their own source of wisdom and permission.

Bess received permission to wear the color purple, to love her body, to recognize her many ways of giving birth, and to be angry. Cali took the receiving of gifts as permission to give herself gifts and in so doing, she began to recognize ways she practiced self-abuse by denying herself things and experiences. Tree understood the experience as permission to give herself more joy in life and to enjoy the good she currently has in her life without sabotaging it.

The Change Process

The mechanics of the change process are as richly varied as the themes that emerged in the imagery. This section will focus its discussion on identifying many of the methods that allowed the guidance, insight, permission

giving and issue raising to take place. This discussion includes the role of modeling and identification, unconditional acceptance, metaphors and projection. It also highlights processes that were facilitated by the structure of the imagery journey itself such as the inclusion of becoming the wise woman, the receiving of gifts, and repeated use of the same imagery. Further processes include the contents of the imagery itself and the participants' follow-up actions to the imagery sessions.

Identification and modeling were facilitated by the appearance of a woman as the source of wisdom and by her embodying the qualities she did. The most dramatic illustration of this importance was Karris' response to the dwelling's inhabitant being female. What was once a situation of fear became a refuge because, for the first time she could remember, she had a model with whom she could identify. This identification was instrumental in her perceived changes in her acceptance and valuation of herself as female. All of the participants drew on their images for a model of female wisdom, strength, centeredness and integration. The experiences with the wise woman became a reference point for future decisions and growth.

The particular qualities of the wise woman's unconditional acceptance and nonjudgmental presence called on the participants to be responsible for who they are. The

wise woman never assumed any responsibility for their choices or growth because she did not have an investment in the outcome of their interaction. This was important for modeling and providing a safe atmosphere in which to explore possible changes. In terms of modeling, the experience of this kind of caring and concern enabled Karris to begin to interact with her spouse in the same manner the wise woman had interacted with her, which eased some of the tension in their relationship. The creation of a safe and supportive environment allowed the participants to let go of old images and behavior patterns and to let new ones emerge.

The experience of becoming the wise woman in the imagery was one of the ways new images and feeling tones emerged. Becoming the wise woman allowed the participant to consider different points of view without making a commitment to make changes within herself. Many of the participants reported experiencing a very different integration of physical and emotional processes (feeling state) when they became the woman which gave them a sense of what the integration they were striving for in their own lives might feel like. The experience of a different viewpoint highlighted not only the possibility of choices but the feeling states associated with those choices. On the practical level, some change in self perception was immediate. Kieran reported returning to herself having shed

some of the peripheral clutter she had brought with her into the image. This facilitated the emergence of more of her innate quietness and centeredness. Cali sought assurance, which was experienced on an internal level when she became the woman and experienced that part of herself that trusts in the "okayness" of things because she herself is "okay." As the imagery sessions continued, participants began reporting a sense of merging more with the wise woman.

The wise woman also acted as a kind of projective screen. The participants projected their concepts of a wise woman or their personal internal, but often unrecognized, wisdom onto the wise woman. Thus, she enabled them to "know what they didn't know." Internal self knowledge became available to the participants on a conscious level. This functioned in surfacing both guidance and issues. This was especially powerful when Karris asked the wise woman what her (the wise woman's) one flaw was. The wise woman replied that she had loved people but had been so hurt by them that she had retreated to the place of Karris' "unreality" (imagination), where she could no longer be hurt. This was an issue that was so painful for Karris that she could only begin to look at it by projecting it onto the wise woman and then identifying her experience as being the same.

Other elements of the imagery journey served to

facilitate change along with the experience of the wise woman. The receiving of the gifts served many roles in this regard. Reflection on the act of receiving the gifts told each participant much about her interaction with the world in terms of her willingness to give and to receive. The gifts also gave ideas form. In some way they became symbols of the lessons learned, though not precise symbols. Kieran explained that their function fell into the interstice between meaning and symbol, perhaps into the realm of metaphor. Regardless of how we explain how this happened, the gifts served as a concrete representation of an internal experience, and thus served a cue function. An encounter with a gift given in the imagery in real life serves as a cue or prompt to remember the entire imagery experience and to be nourished again by that experience. Cali facilitated this cue function by giving herself the gift of a real nautilus shell as a reminder of the experience; she also made herself a meditation pillow.

There were also situations in which the experience within the imagery was so real that it, in itself, resulted in change. The transfer of energy characterized by the purple clothing the wise woman gave to Bess was perceived and acted upon as empowerment. Bess began wearing more purple clothing, began re-imagining former situations of powerlessness, and re-enacting them from the space of power

she felt wearing purple clothing. The energy shared in the image became some of the energy of her daily life.

The fact that the identical imagery was repeated also facilitated specific changes. Cali was aware that she was needing to make some changes in her life but was reluctant to do so. Her first two images occurred in the seclusion of a living tree house. Then the image moved into the more visible location of a log cabin and, finally, into the cave of the wise, wild woman where the image picked her up and moved her along with it. Were the changes reflected in her imagery journeys the cause or effect of changes in her life? While that is an unknown, the repeated imagery drew attention to subtle personal growth and movement. In reflecting on the process of saying good bye to the wise woman, Cali also observed that, in the beginning, she didn't want to leave because she felt a need for being with the woman and a dependency on her. However, by the end of the series, leaving was okay because she had come to trust herself more and felt assured that the wise woman was, in fact, an accessible part of herself. The series of images also allowed for the development of themes and nuances of meaning that might not have emerged in individual sessions, as demonstrated by Kieran's series on the meaning of work or Cali's working through her forthcoming confrontation with her parents.

The final impact of the images is still unknown. As Tree indicated, "The images are still working in ways that I am not yet aware of." Perhaps some of this depends on the degree the participant interacts with the images on her own. Perhaps seeds have been planted that will sprout in their own time in yet unseen ways. Sometimes the process was conscious decision as was illustrated by Kieran's asking herself, "Will I do some active imagination with the images or simply dwell with them and let them take root by themselves?" Kieran summarized the experience of all of the participants by saying that the images are now present in a way that they weren't before and that there is a change in the feeling tone of her life.

Life Carry Over

In order to determine the generalizability of the imagery a follow up or longitudinal study would need to be done. However, there are many examples of the how participants used the concepts and process learned through thier imagery experience in their daily life. Bess became aware of ways in which she gives birth in her life. For example, she realized that during a special planning meeting she was sitting with her legs spread apart even though she was wearing a skirt. She knew within herself that she was

not being obscene but that she was giving birth and that the position of her body reflected that knowledge. Cali found herself in mental conversation with the wise woman, who assured her of the okayness of things and thus she was able to revise some of her life tapes. She also applied her understanding about the cycle of life, death, and rebirth to the death of her son's goldfish by simply allowing its passage and saying good bye. Karris went on a vacation she called a "Karris vacation" by asking herself what Karris would do on this vacation and did those things she would have otherwise denied herself. Examples are still coming in.

CHAPTER 7

SIGNIFICANCE OF WISE WOMAN IMAGERY:

IMPLICATIONS FOR THERAPY

Careful consideration of the nature of the wise woman and the themes and processes developed in the previous chapter suggests that the wise woman imagery has personal, psychological, spiritual and political significance. The following theoretical propositions and their implications for therapy will be considered in this chapter:

1. Wise woman imagery is a path to self-knowledge.
2. The wise woman is a powerful personality who is capable of handling very complex situations because of her ability to draw on various sub-roles such as mother, midwife, healer and virgin.
3. The guided imagery technique is an effective method of gaining access to the wise woman. Further, the guided imagery technique in tandem with the wise woman image provides an effective process of personal change.
4. The wise woman is a mediator between the woman's current expression of self and her possible expressions of self.
5. The wise woman is an image of feminine deity.
6. Wise woman imagery erases the dualisms within and between psychology and theology.
7. The wise woman imagery has important political implications.

Summary of Theoretical Propositions

1. Wise woman imagery is a path to self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge is being used here in the Hebraic sense of not only perceiving an object or situation but also understanding the personal significance and relationship. This presumes the Hebraic view of human beings as being differentiated totalities. Therefore, knowledge means that the whole individual is engaged in the process, not only the mind. Knowledge, in this sense, must be accompanied by emotional reaction and corresponding action. To know with this kind of depth is called wisdom (Interpreter's Bible, 1962). Thus knowledge means understanding the basic connectedness of all things and one's place in the universe.

Self-knowledge so prevaded the reports of the participants' experience that it was impossible to make it a category of function on the same level as the categories already discussed: giving comfort and guidance, sparking insight, raising issues, and empowering because it was the result of all of these experiences. Thus, self-knowledge emerged as the supra-ordinate category: the primary function and significance of the wise woman is to facilitate

self-knowledge. Only during later analysis did it become clear that wisdom is the final stage of knowledge in tradition. So it is natural that the wise woman functions as a way to self-knowledge in the deepest and most connected sense. An example of this kind of self-knowledge was Kieran's gradual recognition that work is not simply a job as it is usually thought of but rather living is one's life work. To a life artist, everything is one's work. The understanding of the meaning of work in her life emerged as a fabric rather than a thread. Many of the gifts (corn, nautilus, unformed lead,) also represented self-knowledge in the sense they called upon the participant to utilize her mind, emotions and behavior to understand and integrate the insight the gift represented.

One of the difficulties in reporting the imagery experience was that the experience was so totally encompassing that words were not adequate to the description. Part of the difficulty in expressing the depth of the experience was that many times the essence of the experience was characterized by the phrase, "it just had a special feeling tone. I don't know how to describe it." Many of the important interactions also took place without words. The communication medium was one of exchanging mental pictures, presence, or simply "knowing." Yet it was precisely this unspeakable quality to the experience that

facilitated the greatest self-knowledge.

This search for self-knowledge calls for therapy to expand its concept of its goals from solving dysfunction to enabling healthy persons to live on the leading edge of life. While some schools of therapy such as the humanistic, transpersonal and feminist have incorporated this view, many have not. The popular conception of therapy is still that therapy is for people who are "sick." Self-identified dis-ease is still what brings people into therapy rather than seeking assistance to better fulfill their personal capacity. One shocking evidence of this attitude is found in the TSCS item on the Personal Integration scale which gives a point if the statement "I don't feel as well as I should" is answered by the response "Completely true." This indicates that one of the qualities of a person judged to be well integrated is that they not feel as well as they should. Why shouldn't the well adjusted person be one who focuses on health and well being instead of ill health? The TSCS seems to have been constructed with the normal or average and sub-normal populations in mind. Where are the scales that identify above normal and striving/flowing populations? Wise woman imagery is a technique and an image that facilitates growth for the dis-eased and the seeking alike.

2. The wise woman is a powerful personality who is capable of handling very complex situations because of her ability to draw on various functions which can be described as the subroles of mother, midwife, healer and virgin. Each imagery session was a demonstration of the sensitivity of the wise woman in her ability to assess the situation and to act appropriately. She never acted in a single role or capacity to any single woman. The roles of mother, midwife, healer and virgin have been suggested because of their similarities to the various functions the wise woman played.

Although a mother serves many functions, some of the most characteristic are those of caregiving by meeting physical needs, giving guidance and comforting. Thus, the role of mother is being used to summarize this group of functions. Karris' wise woman is a good example of the mother role. She nourished Karris by giving her biscuits with honey, dried her clothes following the walk in the rain, tied a bonnet around her head, and gave her water to wash with when it was hot. The mothering behavior that is conspicuous by its absence is that of prescription. While the wise woman often gave guidance she never gave advice. She was not invested in making the participant follow her directions. It is also notable that while the wise woman

fulfilled mothering functions she was never referred to as a "mother" unless it was in the context of being an "earth mother."

The role of midwife is being used to characterize the function of sparking insight since the function of the midwife is to assist in birth transitions. Typically the midwife functions in child birth but the understanding of the birthing process was expanded in chapter 6 to include the birthing of important changes and projects in a woman's life. Sparking insight in this sense refers to the birth of new formulations of ideas or feeling sensations which must then be nurtured to action and maturity. Frequently this was done through metaphoric communication, gifts and the presence embodied by the wise woman. One example of midwifery might be in Cali's transition from her dualistic thinking that life is good and death is bad to a view of the natural, and therefore good, process of life, death and rebirth. This insight was facilitated by receiving the gift of the plant with a bud, a blossom and a withered bloom. Cali later applied that understanding of the cyclical process of life and death to her reactions at the death of her son's fish and to her explanation of the death to her son.

The healer also serves in the capacity of facilitating transitions but her transitions often come through the

gradual healing of long standing dis-ease. As healer, the wise woman understood that the participant was responsible for her own healing. By following the wise woman's guidance Karris was able to follow her internal promptings and arrive at an understanding of her adolescent experience of seduction/rape by a psychiatrist. Karris described this experience as a healing of a long standing wound.

Finally, the virgin represents the functions of being a woman unto herself, a woman who seeks her own self nurturance and empowerment by giving herself permission to do, to be, and to have all that she wants knowing that this deprives others of nothing. This is a return to the ancient meaning of virgin as a person who was her own woman, the property of no one, with full responsibility over her own life (Thorsten, 1980) rather than the current popular meaning of a woman who is sexually uninitiated. In every instance the wise woman was a model of a virgin in its ancient sense and this quality was noted by the participants with approval and as permission to be the same.

By acting in these various capacities the wise woman image embodied exactly the qualities needed by the participant. It is interesting to note that the wise woman primarily took positive roles in relationship to the participants. The images did not show much evidence of the so called "negative aspects of life such as death and

endings" as some people may have predicted. Starhawk develops the goddess as a powerful female image and model who has three faces; maiden, mother, and crone. It is the crone who knows the power of endings and death, "that life feeds on death and death leads on to life" (Starhawk, 1979, p.79). While there were isolated examples of this cyclical view of life such as Cali's plant described above or Kieran's wise woman responding that death is like planting corn, this imagery was not as common as might be expected. This might be explained in three possible ways. The first possibility is that the sample wasn't large enough to fill those categories and the evidence of them foreshadows their development in continued research. Secondly, the researcher may be looking for dualisms like good and evil that are not present in wise woman imagery. Perhaps the cyclical process of life is so thoroughly integrated that what would otherwise be characterized as "bad or evil" was accepted as a natural part of life and was therefore framed differently in the participant's explanation of her experience.

The third possibility is that the wise woman is a reflection of the "idealized self" and since a woman's image of her idealized self is so conditioned by society, the wise woman primarily takes on those functions and roles that are appropriate to women in society. (As used here, the idealized self refers to what a person could be ideally and

not in the critical sense of what a person believes 'she should be to be good enough' developed by Karen Horney.) Of the roles mother, midwife, healer and virgin, only the virgin role embraces a value about which society is ambivalent. It is ok to become an independent woman as long as one does not become too much so. There seems to be growing spoken valuation of women's independence and empowerment and yet this is still under tension in practice since women are conditioned to support the independence and accomplishments of men more than of each other or themselves.

Despite the flexibility of the wise woman image, it appears she is limited by the concept of how a wise woman should be and that is strongly conditioned by societal experience. She is a model of independence and self-sufficiency but she has not yet crossed certain boundaries of social constraints. In the participants imagery, she was never radical in totally unacceptable ways to society, though the implications of the extremely high Psy and extremely low PI scores on the TSCS may suggest that the behavior and values of the wise woman are unacceptable or at least threatening to the 1965 societal norms on which the TSCS was based. The instances in which the wise woman approached embodiment of creator-destroyer and/or in sexual images occurred for women who had already taken a stronger

stance in accepting those possibilities in their lives in general. Thus it appears that the wise woman encourages the participant on her individual journey and while she encourages growth and pushes the participant towards new integrations of experience and views of reality, it happens in very small but acceptable steps without prescriptions.

This proposition suggests that at least some of the goals of therapy are giving guidance and comfort (not advice), sparking insight, healing dis-ease, and empowering. The therapist may take on the roles of mother, midwife, healer and virgin but the therapist should also be reminded that the basic philosophical perspective is that the client has the resources within that are needed and appropriate to the situation. Thus, counselor roles would not take on a directive tone or allow clients to become dependent on the therapist.

3. The guided imagery technique is an effective method of gaining access to the wise woman. Further, the guided imagery technique in tandem with the wise woman image provides an effective process of personal change. This study demonstrates that dialogue with an internal wise woman does take place within the method of guided imagery. This is the same concept that was used successfully by Assagioli

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(1965) in his technique of dialoging with the Higher Self. The process is used by many therapists and religious leaders. The other related method that can be readily used for gaining access to the wise woman is Jung's active imagination which was discussed in chapter 2. It is similar to guided imagery but a more conscious and perhaps a more verbal process that can be engaged without the assistance of a guide.

Assagioli, Jung, Starhawk, and Mariechild are all therapists who recognize one of the most important goals of therapy is to empower the individual by enabling them to get in touch with their own inner wisdom. All of them use guided imagery with an inner guide. This study provides some of the theoretical background that argues for increased use of the method with the use of the wise woman image in particular.

Although grounded theory attempts to develop theory rather than to provide verification, this study has also demonstrated a change process that has been effective for the participants of this study. The use of a wise woman in the guided imagery facilitated the identification of the participant with the wise woman and thereby provided a powerful role model for the participant. The modeling function of the wise woman which facilitated empowerment was further developed in the imagery by suggesting that the

participant become the wise woman. Thus, the wise woman became a model and a means of internal integration as well as a model of external behaviors and attitudes towards the world. The repetition of the image provided reinforcement for possible personal changes as well as development in the nuances of understanding personal issues. Additional reinforcement was provided by the participants receiving gifts from the wise woman which later served as cues to remembering the entire experience. The gifts also served as sources of affirmation and even as challenges or reminders to follow through on the experience. Discussion of other particular change techniques such as metaphor, projection and unconditional acceptance has been undertaken already in Chapter 6.

The wise woman image is not entirely new. It has been included in imagery exercises developed by Starhawk (1979), Iglehart (1983) and Mariechild (1981). The image used in this study was distinctive however, in its inclusion of the suggestion to become the woman. Also, receiving the gift appears only in the imagery independently developed by Iglehart. Therefore the design of the imagery as well as the use of the wise woman in the guided imagery resulted in a particularly effective method of facilitating insight and personal growth.

4. The wise woman is a mediator between the woman's current expression of self and her possible expressions of self. The wise woman appears to be a personification of the participant's idealized self. If what we believe about ourselves and our interaction with the world tends to become manifest in reality, then the wise woman may enable the participant to be aware of her current view of self and of her potential for more satisfying behavior. Sometimes the contrast created by being one's self and by becoming the wise woman enabled an immediate shift in perception of self and consequent behavior. This was illustrated when Kieran returned to her waking self having shed some of the peripheral clutteredness she brought with her to reveal an internal quietness that was already there but not yet manifest. This experience of coming more in touch with the core of one's self, experience or belief is a major, though often unacknowledged, goal of therapy. Far too often therapy becomes sidetracked in the clutter of peripheral issues in an attempt to find the core when stillness and perhaps imagery could cut through the clutter more effectively.

This role of the wise woman does not suggest that the participant would become exactly like the wise woman but rather she would learn how to integrate the various pieces

of her life in a personally more adequate, yet different, way than the wise woman. The participants also recognized that as they embodied this integration others would recognize a similar quality of wisdom about their lives. Thus each participant came away from the experience expressing an internal sense of the direction she wanted to develop in her life. In this way the wise woman serves as a bridge in changing expressions of self.

5. The wise woman is an image of female diety. The participants in the study understood "the divine" to be the spirituality that was rooted in the earth and represented the connectedness of all persons and things. It was conceptualized as either spirit or energy that encompassed the flow and holiness of everything and yet it also had the attitudes of nurturing, loving and giving the latitude to change.

Each participant felt that the wise woman was an expression of her understanding of the divine. In some instances she called into question the "maleness" of diety; in other instances the participant had already chosen a female representation of divinity for her personal life.

The participants tended to view the wise woman in the same role as the diety with which they presently

identified. If their current spirituality was focused on an internalized female diety the wise woman was seen as goddess. Bess complained that the imagery wasn't more explicitly goddess oriented and that the wise woman in the image was presented as someone other than herself with whom she could talk. She would have preferred the image to have been one of going within herself to find the goddess or wise woman within instead of finding her in a dwelling and becoming her. Tree had a Catholic background which she still saw as her basic spiritual orientation even though she had left the church. The wise woman had achieved a "higher degree of perfection" than the rest of us. Thus she was more transcendent and it was enough for Tree to "bask in her presence." In this instance the interaction still maintained more of a hierarchical quality than it did for other participants who had replaced former spiritual understanding with something more expressly feminist.

The presence of female images of diety have, like the wise woman images, come and gone through the ages. Joseph Campbell (1971) has summarized the mythological evidence pertaining to the history of dieties. Mythology and art indicate the earliest beliefs were that the world was created and overseen by a goddess. Later the goddess was joined by consort, first a daughter and then a son. The son became her lover, they became the Divine pair and gradually

the Divine Mother was phased into obscurity as God the Father became the sole authority. In the transition phase the Jewish tradition contained the feminine "hokhmah" or wisdom as a quality of diety. The gnostic tradition described the divine Mother as part of the original Dyad though Pagels (1979) argues that this conception was not drawn from goddess imagery since it maintained the monotheistic world view. Since that time Christianity has wiped all references to the goddess from its tradition. Mary was the only evidence of femininity within the tradition and her position was carefully relegated to certain roles. In recent years, an argument for the feminity of the Holy Spirit has gained some popularity.

As was mentioned in the first chapter, the recent wave of feminism has called our attention to the role male imagery of diety has bound the lives and situations of women. This recognition has led to the development of various arguments for the "Motherhood of God," female images of the diety such as goddess images, or at the very least, the claim that Jesus was a feminist.

What do feminists hope to gain by this movement? What qualities of a female divine are being advanced? Does the wise woman meet these expressed needs? It is this writer's belief that the movement toward developing female images of diety is based on the search for validation of women's right

to seek equality in society. Women are seeking legitimation to the claim that we are equal to men by finding ourselves also created in the image of deity. It is an issue of identity and an issue of equality. Much of the logic that led to the development of a patriarchal society was based on the assumption that men are better than women; Scripture, which portrayed god in male images, validated that doctrine.

Schaeff and Broverman have graphically demonstrated the prevalence of the belief that women are the second sex. Schaeff (1981) illustrates the dominance of this thought and its effects of women by asking the audience to list qualities of God (male, omnipotent, omniscient, immortal, eternal). She then asks for the qualities of humankind (childlike, sinful, weak, mortal). This is followed by a request for male (intelligent, powerful, brave, good, strong) and female (emotional, weak, fearful, sinful, like children) qualities. Thus, "male is to female what God is to humankind" (p.163).

Broverman (1970) carried out a study to determine the characteristics of a healthy adult by asking therapists to fill out a personality inventory for a healthy adult, a healthy male, and a healthy female. The profiles of the healthy adult and the healthy male were the same. The profile of the healthy female showed her to be much less

adequate than a healthy person (read male). This suggests that our culture has manifested the value of men being created more in the image of God than women. Only when women have the same valuation in the images of deity can they seek and expect to receive equal treatment in the world. This has implications for both the personal growth and development of women and the political or societal structures of our world. It is impossible for one to change without the concurrent change of the other. Images of female divinity lead to personal empowerment which then enables women to seek empowerment in the world. As women seek and find empowerment in the world other women are further empowered on the personal level.

Elaine Pagels (1979) is among those women who are re-evaluating history in search of the female divine. Her review of gnostic literature indicates the female aspect of the divine incorporates the qualities of motherhood, wisdom (which in this context means both 'first universal creator' and enlightener, p.6), and spirit. This image of the divine Motherhood embodies the same comfort-giving, birthing, insight sparking, and connecting functions that emerged as qualities of the wise woman.

Carol Christ (1979) has expanded the concept of the goddess as an image of female divinity. She sees the goddess as an independent, creative and strong female who

values the female body and will, and who teaches women to trust themselves and other women. Again the wise woman imagery has demonstrated the ability to act in these capacities.

The above two examples offer collaborating evidence to the experience of the participants that the wise woman does indeed function in the same way as an image of the female divine. It does not matter whether the participant views herself as standing within or apart from the Christian tradition. The wise woman can stand as an image of the female aspect of god or the goddess herself. She functions whether the woman focuses on the transcendent or immanent dimensions of deity. This flexibility may show the wise woman to be a more powerful image for many women than the goddess because the concept of the wise woman doesn't carry the negative connotations relating to blasphemy, witchcraft, and idol worship that have been attached to goddess worship. Yet she can be called the goddess as well. Perhaps the wise woman will prove to be an image that transcends the current divergent streams of thought in feminist theology since she can relate to evangelical, liberationist and exodus women.

6. The wise woman imagery erases the dualisms within

and between both psychology and theology. This is not to suggest that psychology and theology be merged into a single large field, nor to suggest that this image is a global solution to this dilemma but dualisms were remarkably absent from the participants experiences. Both psychology and theology, indeed most of our current world view, assumes the existence and importance of dualisms such as good/evil, light/dark, mind/body, us/them, inner/outer, heaven/earth, transcendent/immanent, sacred/secular, male/female and so on. It has been accepted that the first term in each of the dualistic pairs was relatively good and the second relatively evil. The effects of this kind of thinking have been convincingly argued by Susan Griffin (1978), Mary Daly (1980) and many others. Our current ecological crisis, nuclear crisis and resource crisis are among the effects attributed to dualistic thinking that separated man (read men) from their environment. It has been less the case with women since they were the part of the species that was delegated the task of maintaining connection with nature, a task that was an extension of their carnal, birthgiving natures. Thus women never really lost their connection with earth and body wisdom to the same extent as men.

The experiences reported in this study indicated an equation of the secular and the sacred or at the very least that the goal of life was to recognize the sacredness of the

secular and the secularness of the sacred. The emerging self-knowledge of the participants led to the re-membling of the insight that the warp and the woof in a tapestry are so integrated that in the end the texture and design cannot emerge without both; it is the same for the sacredness and secularness of life. Kieran was trying to understand the meaning of work as she faced decisions about her future but the images of the wise women, together with their stories led her to the conclusion that she could not separate work out as a separate life activity; all activity was her life work. Her work was to become a life artist. Work was at once both sacred and secular. In fact the wise woman never pulled things apart in order to understand them. Her wisdom was expressed in the ways she pulled things together and embodied the integration of seemingly diverse values.

Perhaps the strongest evidence for the erasure of the dualism between psychology and theology was the absence of this distinction in the experiences of the women. In fact when the interviewer asked questions that isolated these dimensions of experience the participants all indicated that it was an artificial division and their experience didn't break down that way. The wise woman, then, simply did not work in dualistic images. She represented the integrated cyclic view of life that let go of cause and effect thinking in favor of interactive thinking.

The proposal that these dualism be erased is not unique to this study. Nelle Morton has pointed out that the transcendent concept found in theology carries with it a hierarchical direction that assumed ultimacy that comes "down from up above." This is in contrast to the organic life view that comes "up from down under." (1977, p.11.) Morton emphasizes the importance of the cyclical interaction of the two processes. The process of rising from the depths as well as coming down from above as the wise woman does, erases the dualisms imposed from the world view in which ultimacy comes primarily from above.

One of the most important implications of the erasure of dualisms in psychology and theology is that women can no longer be seen as "other." And if woman can no longer be considered "other", neither can anyone else be considered "other". If there is no "other" then there is no longer justification for war, racism, sexism or exploitation of the environment. There have been movements against these injustices, but until the dualism that allow for the division of "us and other" are erased, the problems will continue.

7. The wise woman imagery has important political implications. Traditionally the roles of women have been

developed in relationship to their interaction with men. Even Jung, who recognized that the feminine is an original mode of being and not simply deficient masculinity, was not able to talk about women or the nature of women without talking about men. The wise woman image provided comfort, insight, healing and empowerment without doing so in the context of men. In fact, the only discussion of men in the participants imagery was in the context of how empowering it was to have a female wise person rather than the more typical male image or sage as the central element in the image. This then is a very radical image in that it enables women to find their own power within themselves and among other women. It gives women permission to turn to themselves as their own sources of authority. It is no longer necessary for a woman to determine the goals and values of their lives based on the desires of the men they must serve, whether they are fathers, husbands, sons, priests or rulers. She has the right to choose her personal values and goals based on the longings of her soul to be all that she longs to be.

The changing of the locus of control from external males to an internalized female image subverts the functions of a male god and the resulting patriarchal society described by Carol Christ (1979). The wise woman can serve as an image that enables women to (1) move away from

childish economic, psychological and spiritual dependence on men; (2) value female power as legitimate and good; (3) assume rightful political and social places; (4) affirm women's full sexual identity as being in the image and likeness of god; and (5) trust herself and other women.

The wise woman image moves beyond these dimensions of personal growth to include necessary action in the world. The birth giving and nurturing function of women and their view of the connectedness of all things will lead them into the forefront of the movement to protect life on the planet. The full impact of this call to action emerged in a 5th image which Bess had in a group setting. It will be remembered that in an earlier session Bess gave birth in the ocean following the destruction of the earth. In this post research image she meets the wise woman in a womblike structure and together they frolic and play, rolling around, jumping, laughing. Suddenly the structure began to vibrate and Bess becomes frightened and says to the wise woman "Now they have done it, they really are destroying the world." The wise woman replied, "No, this is what an orgasm feels like from the inside." What was powerful was Bess's comment to the group explaining her experience, "How dare men try to imitate women's orgasms by building the bomb." This imagery experience illustrates the wisdom and the power to act that arises from listening to and learning from the wisdom of our

own bodies, our own intuition.

Future Research Questions

Now that some theoretical propositions have been elaborated it is important to reiterate the limitations of this heuristic study. The sample size was small and very limited in focus for theoretical reasons. Therefore, while potentially valuable hypothesis have been generated, they cannot be generalized to the population at large beyond caucasian, spiritually orientated feminists. Even that generalization would be greatly stretched based on a sample size of five participants. It should also be noted that the researcher assessing the effects of wise woman imagery intervention was also the researcher doing the intervention. While caution was used in being as objective as possible, it is conceivable that bias entered into the evaluation process. Grounded theory methodology allows for much more researcher interaction with study participants than many forms of research but it is clearly a heuristic research approach and not an experimental or confirmatory approach. Prior to verification and formal theory development, larger, more diverse samples need to be studied.

This study was only the first step in developing formal

theory concerning the function and significance of the wise woman in guided imagery. The next step in grounded theory research is to manipulate the variables of theoretical sample, of elements within the image, and of leadership of the guided imagery. For example, the use of this imagery with different theoretical samples enables us to theorize about its usefulness to women who are not feminist, women who are anti-feminist, and men. Does class, sex, cultural background or religious tradition make a difference in the significance and function of the wise woman? Does the significance and function change for women when the image is led by a man rather than a woman? Does the function and significance change for men when the image is led by a man rather than a woman? What happens if the imagery setting is changed from a path which participants tend to associate with a natural environment to a street or university walkway? Would the nature of the wisdom become more intellectual or abstract? Does the impact of the imagery change if the wise woman is described as the wise part of the participant rather than an external wisdom as done in this study? Does the imagery work as well in a group as it does individually?

Research questions also merit exploration. Does the belief or non belief of the researcher in the wise woman influence the outcome of the study? Does the researcher's

thoughts and expectations influence the image? If the researcher wonders to herself why none of the images takes place on city streets instead of paths in the park and the participant then describes that image as taking place on a city street did the researcher's thoughts influence the image; did the researcher psychically pick up on the image of the participant or was it coincidence? How might this theory be validated?

Many of the therapeutic issues that were touched on in this research deserve further study. What does it mean that the wise woman and the feminist participants in the study tested high on the Psy scale and low on the PI scale? Is this a reflection on the test instrument? Is the test instrument a reflection of societal values that need to be rethought to focus on health and wholeness rather than on dis-ease? How would Jesus score on the same instrument if the test were taken by persons who felt themselves to have a relationship with him? Would his profile be similar to that of the wise woman's? What would it mean for spiritual leaders and therapists? Are there any contra-indications for the use of the wise woman image in therapy? Under what circumstances is wise woman imagery the method of choice? Does the image work as well when done alone as when it is done with a therapist, spiritual leader or friend?

Conclusion

It appears the the great archetypal current described by Nor Hall (1980) is once again washing the wise woman image up onto the shore. But now this image is moving among us in more conscious ways than she has in the past. The wise woman images reported in this study touch the lives of participants and readers alike as they bring us closer in touch with ourselves. The concluding verses of Anne Cameron's Daughters of Copper Woman (1981, p.150) also stand as the most appropriate conclusion for this phase of wise woman research:

I have been searching
lost
alone
I have been searching
for so many years

I have been searching
Old Woman

and I find her
in
mySelf

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

GUIDED IMAGERY

Note to the reader: Three periods are frequently used to indicate a long pause to allow for the imagery to develop. The pauses during the relaxation are much shorter than those in the body of the imagery. The entire imagery takes 22-27 minutes.

In this session I will be taking you through a relaxation exercise and guided imagery. After the guided imagery, I will ask you to share your experience with me.

Sit comfortably now, close your eyes and begin to relax. Become aware of your breathing. Take full, deep breaths. Let your body relax now. Allow yourself to become more and more relaxed. Breathe very deeply now and send your breath into your toes and feet. And let your breath, like a healing massage, break up any strain or tension, and as you exhale, let the tension drain away. Breathe deeply now and send the breath into your ankles. Let your breath break up any stress and let the tension drain away. Now let your breath flow into your knees; let it break up any

tension. Breathe into your thighs and hips; your breath as a healing massage is breaking up any strain or tension, and as you exhale the tension is draining away. Breathe into your genitals now. The deep, relaxing energy is flowing into your genitals and any tension is draining away. Now breathe into your abdomen; all your internal organs are soothed and relaxed, and any tension or strain is draining away. Let your breath flow into your chest and breasts; let it soothe you and, as you exhale, any tension is draining away. Breathe into your back now; your breath is like a healing massage that is breaking up any strain and tension. The deep, relaxing energy is flowing through your back into each vertebra as each vertebra assumes its proper alignment. And the healing breath is flowing into all your muscles and tendons, and you are very relaxed. Breathe into your shoulders and neck; your breath, like a healing massage, is breaking up any stress or tension and, as you exhale, the tension is draining away. Your shoulders and neck are now fully relaxed. And the deep, relaxing energy is flowing into your arms; your upper arms, your elbows, your forearms, your wrists, your hands and your fingers are deeply relaxed. Breathe into your shoulders and neck once again and let them relax more fully. Become more and more relaxed. And let that relaxing energy wash up over your throat, and your lips; let your jaw and cheeks fully relax.

As you send the healing breath into your face, the muscles around your eyes, your forehead and your scalp are deeply relaxed. Any strain or tension is draining away. You are completely relaxed. Let your mind become clear; let it become relaxed and clear.

Now imagine you are on a path. As you walk along, focus your attention on your surroundings... What do you see?... Do any sounds attract your attention?... Are there any particular scents?... How do you feel as you travel along this path?... Now notice a dwelling that seems to call to you... What are you feeling as you make your way towards the dwelling?... Do your surroundings change?... What are your impressions of the dwelling?... Enter the dwelling... What do you see?... What are you feeling?...

This is the dwelling of a woman who radiates wisdom. Become aware of the presence of this woman... What is she wearing?... Notice her body...her face...her eyes...her gestures... Sensing her wisdom, you ask her some question that is important to you... Watch the woman and see how she reacts to what you say... She might respond with words, gestures, facial expressions, or she might show you something...

Now become this woman... What is your existence like as this woman?... How do you feel?... What is your life like?... What is your attitude toward this visitor who asks

you questions?... What do you feel towards this visitor?...

Now become yourself again and continue your conversation with this woman. Do you have any other questions to ask her?

Soon you will have to say goodbye to this woman. Say anything else you want before you leave... Just as you are about to say goodbye, this woman gives you something to bring home with you... How do you feel towards the woman now?... Tell her how you feel... Say goodbye and return to the path taking what she gave you with you... What does it mean to you?... Stay in this place a while and when you are ready to let yourself drift up and back to your usual waking reality, bring what she gave you with you. Take your time... You will return relaxed, refreshed, and filled with energy... Return now, gently and easily. Open your eyes and stretch your body.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Birthday_____

Education_____

Present Religion_____

Childhood Religion_____

Describe your previous experiences with guided imagery.

Describe your previous experiences with guided imagery using a woman as the primary image.

What associations do you have to the paths? How do the associations relate to each other? (The dwelling, the woman, becoming the woman, the act of receiving the gift, the goodbye, the gifts.)

What was the most significant element of the imagery?

Which was the most significant image for you? Why?

Were your imagery journeys influenced by what is happening in your daily life? In what ways?

Have your imagery journeys influenced your daily life?

How might these images help you make sense of life?

What key life issues are you currently struggling with?

Have the imagery journeys shed light on any of these issues? Explain.

What did you learn about yourself as a result of this experience?

Do you expect to use this image in the future?

How do you understand the identity of the woman in your images?

When did you first identify as a feminist? Is that associated with a specific event in your life?

What is the relationship between your identity as a feminist and your spirituality?

Do you relate your imagery experience to your spirituality? Explain.

Comment on your present image of the divine.

Do the women in your images relate to your concept of the divine? Explain.

APPENDIX C

TSCS PROFILE SHEETS

1. Kieran
2. Bess
3. Cali
4. Karris
5. Tree
6. Mean

IDENTIFICATION CODE

..... Pre-test

----- Post-test

_____ Wise woman test

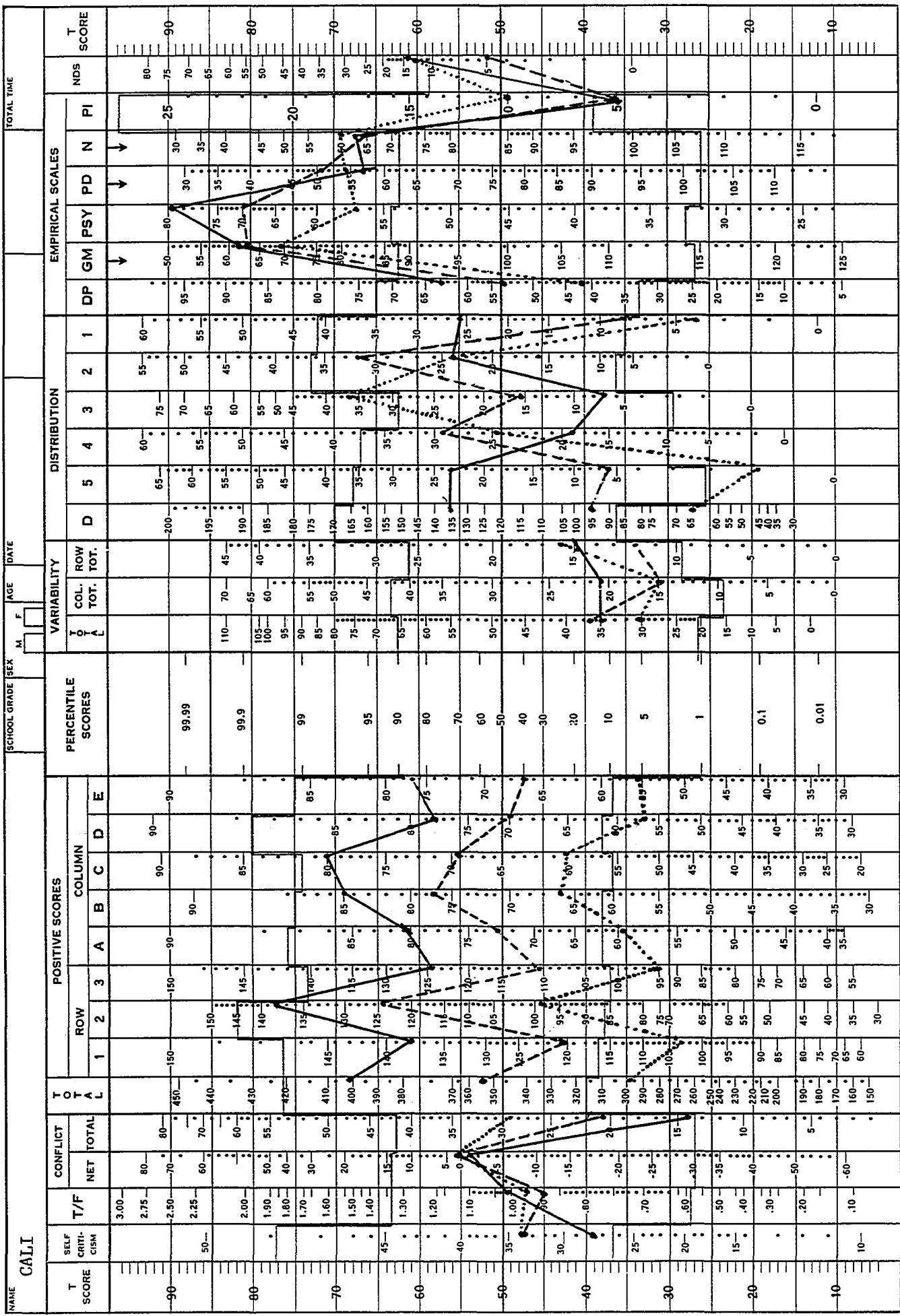
PROFILE SHEET

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PROFILE SHEET



NAME _____ CALI _____ SCHOOL GRADE _____ SEX _____ AGE _____ DATE _____ TOTAL TIME _____

PROFILE UP 16 7 29 44 14 11 24 13 17 16 24 11 17
LIMITS DOWN 29 9 24 17 9 24 15 12 17 12 24 20 49

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Tennessee Self Concept Scale
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NAME
KARRIS
SCHOOL GRADE
SEX
AGE
DATE
TOTAL TIME

T SCORE	SELF CRITI- CISM	T/F	CONFLICT		POSITIVE SCORES							PERCENTILE SCORES	VARIABILITY		DISTRIBUTION						EMPIRICAL SCALES						NDS	T SCORE
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					1	2	3	A	B	C	D	E		I L														
90	50	3.00	80	450	150	150	90	90	90	90	90	90	99.99	110	70	45	200	65	60	55	50	50	50	50	50	50	80	
80		2.75	70	440	145	145	85	85	85	85	85	85	99.9	105	60	40	185	60	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	75	
70		2.50	60	430	140	140	80	80	80	80	80	80	99	90	55	35	175	55	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	65	
60		2.25	50	420	135	135	75	75	75	75	75	75	95	85	50	30	165	50	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	70	
50		2.00	40	410	130	130	70	70	70	70	70	70	90	80	45	25	155	45	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	80	
40		1.75	30	400	125	125	65	65	65	65	65	65	85	75	40	20	145	40	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	90	
30		1.50	20	390	120	120	60	60	60	60	60	60	80	70	35	15	135	35	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	100	
20		1.40	10	380	115	115	55	55	55	55	55	55	75	65	30	10	125	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	110	
10		1.30	0	370	110	110	50	50	50	50	50	50	70	60	25	5	115	25	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	120	
		1.20	-10	360	105	105	45	45	45	45	45	45	65	55	20	0	110	20	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	130	
		1.10	-20	350	100	100	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	50	15	-5	105	15	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	140	
		1.00	-30	340	95	95	35	35	35	35	35	35	55	45	10	-10	100	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150	
		.90	-40	330	90	90	30	30	30	30	30	30	50	40	5	-20	95	5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	160	
		.80	-50	320	85	85	25	25	25	25	25	25	45	35	0	-30	90	0	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	170	
		.70	-60	310	80	80	20	20	20	20	20	20	40	30	-5	-40	85	-5	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	180	
		.60	-70	300	75	75	15	15	15	15	15	15	35															

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UP	16	7	29	44	14	11	24	13	17	16	24	11	17	8	14	39
DOWN	29	9	24	17	9	24	15	12	17	12	24	20	49	5	29	12

PROFILE SHEET

Tennessee Self Concept Scale
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UP	16	7	29	44	14	11	24	13	17	16	24	11	17	8	14	39
DOWN	29	9	24	17	9	24	15	12	17	12	24	20	49	5	29	12

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